

THE EASTERN NATIONS  
AND GREECE

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MYERS



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VIEW OF THE ATTIC PLAINS, WITH A GLIMPSE OF THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS. — Frontispiece.



# ANCIENT HISTORY

FOR

COLLEGES AND HIGH SCHOOLS.

BY

WILLIAM F. ALLEN

AND

P. V. N. MYERS.



## PART I.

THE EASTERN NATIONS AND GREECE.

BY

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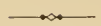
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## PREFACE TO PART FIRST.



THE following pages are a revision and expansion of the corresponding part of my *Outlines of Ancient History*, which was published as a library book in 1882, by Messrs. Harper & Brothers. It is through the generous action of these publishers that I have had the advantage of making this earlier work the basis of the present text-book.

The chapters relating to the Eastern nations have been rewritten in the light of the most recent revelations of the monuments of Egypt and Babylonia. The connecting links between the history of the East and that of the West have been carefully traced, and the influence of Oriental civilization upon the later development of the Western peoples fully indicated. It is shown that, before the East gave a religion to the West, it imparted to the younger peoples of Europe many primary elements of art and general culture. This lends a sort of epic unity to a series of events and historic developments too apt to be regarded as fragmentary and unrelated, and invests the history of the old civilizations of the Orient with fresh interest and instruction.

In tracing the growth of Greek civilization, while the value of the germs of culture which the Greeks received from the older nations of the East is strongly insisted upon, still it is admitted that the determining factor in the wonderful Greek development was the peculiar genius of the Greek race itself.

The references throughout the book are given, not alone with the view of directing the pupil to the sources of information, but also of making acknowledgment of indebtedness. In addition to these references to the authorities I have used, I wish here to make special mention of my indebtedness to the works of George Rawlinson, Sayce, Wilkinson, Brugsch, Grote, Curtius, and Dr. William Smith.

The maps and illustrations with which my publishers have so liberally enriched the book, have been drawn from the most authentic sources. The maps are reproductions of the admirable charts accompanying Professor Freeman's *Historical Geography of Europe*; while the cuts, which have been chosen solely with reference to their historical and illustrative value, are, in the main, selections from Prang's *Illustrations of the History of Art*, and Oscar Jäger's *Weltgeschichte*.

For many valuable criticisms and suggestions, I wish to express my hearty thanks to Professor William F. Allen, of the University of Wisconsin, and D. H. Montgomery, Esq., of Boston.

COLLEGE HILL, OHIO,  
Feb. 4, 1888.

P. V. N. M.

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# ANCIENT HISTORY.



## INTRODUCTION.

### THE RACES AND THEIR EARLY MIGRATIONS.

**Definition of History.**—(History is a narrative of the life of humanity.) The recital properly begins at that point in the progress of mankind where clans and tribes are found gathered in the larger political units called States, or Nations.

If the narrative deal chiefly with outer, public events, such as the doings of kings and the fortunes of dynasties, wars between nations, and the feuds and contentions within a state of rival political parties, then the record constitutes *Political History*; if, however, the recital concern itself mainly with the real, inner life of nations, with the progress of art, science, literature, religion, and general culture, with the growth of ideas and institutions, then it becomes a *History of Civilization*. (But it is only the narrative that weaves the several threads of these special histories into a single and continuous story, that constitutes History in the unrestricted meaning of the term.) The present work aims to be a history in this general sense.

**Divisions of History.**—History is usually divided into three periods, — Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern. Ancient History begins with the earliest nations of which we can gain any certain knowledge, and extends to the fall of the Roman Empire

in the West, A.D. 476. Mediæval History embraces the period, about one thousand years in length, lying between the fall of Rome and the discovery of the New World by Columbus, A.D. 1492. Modern History commences with the close of the Mediæval period and extends to the present time.

Some prefer to date the beginning of the Modern period from the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, A.D. 1453; while still others speak of it in a general way as commencing about the close of the 15th century, at which time there were many inventions and discoveries, and a great stir in the intellectual world.

**Antiquity of Man.** — We do not know when man first came into possession of the earth. His antiquity, like the age of the planet he inhabits, is shrouded in obscurity. But as the science of geology has taught us that the earth is very old, much older than we once thought, so different sciences are telling us that man has been upon the earth a much longer time than we have been used to supposing. Yet we can set no definite date to his first appearance. We only know that, in ages vastly remote, when both the climate and outline of Europe were very different from what they are at present, man lived on that continent with animals now extinct; and that, about 3000 B.C., when the historic curtain first rises, vast migratory movements, manifestly begun long before that date, are going on among the families and tribes of the different races of mankind;) while in some favored regions, as in the valley of the Nile, there are nations and civilizations already venerable with age, and possessing arts, governments, and institutions that bear evidence of slow growth through very long periods of prehistoric times.

The investigation and study of this vast background of human life, that lies so dim and mysterious in the remote past, is left to such sciences as Ethnology, Comparative Philology, and Prehistoric Archæology.

**The Races of Mankind.** — Distinctions in form, color, and physiognomy divide the human species into three great types, or races, known as the Black (Ethiopian, or Negro), the Yellow

(Turanian, or Mongolian), and the White (Caucasian).<sup>1</sup> These races subdivide themselves into numerous families and peoples.<sup>2</sup>

As to which of these great races is the oldest, or the original type, we have no positive knowledge; however, (many testimonies — ethnological, linguistic, and historical — concur in leading us to assume that they all stand in the relation of children to an original mother-type that is lost.)

We must not suppose each of these three types to be sharply marked off from the others: they shade into one another by insensible gradations. Thus, passing from the temperate regions of Northern Africa to the tropical countries of the interior of that continent, we find the different tribes encountered exhibiting a "chromatic scale" that embraces all the shades of color, from the slightly bronzed Caucasian to the jet-black negro. Yet we know that those race characteristics to which we have referred, though capable of being greatly modified by climate and the varying conditions of life, are very persistent. There has been no perceptible change in the great types during historic times. The paintings upon the oldest Egyptian monuments show us that at the dawn of history, about five or six thousand years ago, the principal races were as distinctly marked as now, each bearing its racial badge of color and physiognomy. As early as the times of Jeremiah, the permanency of physical characteristics had passed into the proverb, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?"

(On account of this persistent character of form, complexion, and physiognomy, these physical distinctions form a better basis of classification than language; for migrations and conquests often

<sup>1</sup> The Malays and American Indians, formerly classified as distinct races, are now generally regarded simply as branches of the Yellow race. See table at end of chapter.

(<sup>2</sup> Tribes and nations are political, not ethnological, units.) Often a nation is a mixture of several different peoples or even races; as, for example, the French nation, in which are found Celtic, Roman, and Teutonic elements; and the nation of the United States, in which are commingled peoples representing all three of the primary types.

result in a people's giving up their own and adopting a foreign tongue, while at the same time retaining all their physical peculiarities. To efface these requires a great lapse of time. Thus the Jews have in general adopted the languages of the different peoples among whom they have found a home ; but the Hebrew physiognomy is as marked to-day as it was three thousand years ago.

Still, the study of languages is often a very great help in determining the relationships of different peoples ; and in some cases a linguistic classification, that is, one based on affinities of speech, is more satisfactory and accurate than one based on physical features. Thus we should hardly have suspected from their physical features that the Hindus are related to us, but a comparative study of their language and ours proves that we are akin.

Traditions, too, may sometimes cast light upon a people's origin or relationships ; but the legends of a people have to be scrutinized very carefully before they can be received in evidence on such a point.

Of all the races, the White, or Caucasian, exhibits by far the most perfect type, physically, intellectually, and morally. It is the race with which we shall be almost exclusively concerned, as the other two races, if we except some few nations of the Turanian stock, have not played any great part in the drama of history. Possessing richer mental and spiritual endowments than the other races, and animated, in most of its branches, with a wonderful energy, the migrations and conquests of its different peoples, and the achievements of its various families in the fields of science, art, literature, philosophy, and religion, fill most of the pages of the historian, and render instructive the story he has to tell.

In paragraphs which follow we will say something of each of the three great branches into which the White race divides itself ; but first a word respecting the Turanian peoples.

**The Turanian Peoples.** — The term Turanian is very loosely applied to many and widely separated families and peoples. It is

made to include the Chinese, and other more or less closely allied peoples of Eastern Asia; the Malays, and the people of many of the Pacific Islands; the nomadic tribes of Central and Northern Asia and of Eastern Russia; the Ottoman Turks, the Hungarians, the Finns, the Lapps, and the Basques, in Europe; and the Esquimaux and American Indians.

In the remotest times the peoples of this race had spread themselves over almost all Asia, Europe, and North and South America. They were seemingly the first intruders upon these virgin continents, save in some quarters, as in India, where they seem to have encountered a still earlier negro population. Whence they came, or at how early a period they took possession of the continents, we cannot say; we are only certain that when, long before our era, the Semites and Aryans left their primitive homes, perhaps in Central Asia, and went out in search of new abodes, wherever they went, in India, in Persia, in Mesopotamia, in Asia Minor, in Europe, and, later, in this New World, they found peoples of this race already in possession of the soil.

In these countries, these aboriginal inhabitants were, in the main, either exterminated or absorbed by the new-comers. In Europe, however, two small areas of this primitive population escaped the common fate—the Basques, sheltered among the Pyrenees, and the Finns and Lapps, in the far North. (Some consider the Etrurians in Italy as another remnant of the same race.) These little patches of primitive population have been likened to islands rising above the waters of a destructive inundation. The Hungarians and Turks are Turanian peoples that have thrust themselves into Europe during historic times.

The polished stone implements found in the caves and river-gravels of Western Europe, the shell-mounds, or kitchen-middens,<sup>1</sup> upon the shores of the Baltic, the Swiss lake-habitations, and the

<sup>1</sup> “These mounds are some five or ten feet high, and in length as much, sometimes, as a thousand feet, by one or two hundred in breadth. The mounds consist for the most part of myriads of cast-away shells of oysters, mussels, cockles, and other shell-fish.” — KEARY.



barrows, or grave-mounds, found in all parts of Europe, are supposed to be relics of a prehistoric Turanian people.

In North America, also, a remnant of the aboriginal Turanian population is still to be found in the Indian tribes west of the Mississippi; while in South and Central America and in Mexico the native Turanian peoples, mixed with the white colonists (Spaniards and Portuguese), form a considerable part of the present population.

Although some of the Turanian peoples, as, for instance, the Chinese and the Magyars, have made considerable advance in civilization, still as a rule the peoples of this race have made but little progress in the arts and in general culture, — perhaps simply through lack of favoring circumstances. Even their languages have remained undeveloped. These seem immature, or stunted in their growth. They have no declensions or conjugations, like those of the languages of the Caucasian peoples, but are made up of monosyllables, or of these merely “stuck together,” as it were, and hence are called *agglutinative* languages.

**The Three Families of the White Race.** — As has been already remarked, the White, or Caucasian, race embraces the historic nations. This type divides itself into three families, — the Hamitic, the Semitic, and the Aryan, or Indo-European (formerly called the Japhetic). These peoples have been the standard-bearers of the advancing culture and civilization of the world.

**The Hamites.** — The ancient Egyptians were the chief people of the Hamitic branch of the White race. They seem to have come from Asia, but we are without any positive knowledge respecting their original seat and their prehistoric migrations. In the gray dawn of history we discover them already settled in the valley of the Nile, and there erecting great monuments so faultless in construction as to render it certain that those who planned them had had a very long previous training in the art of building.

We shall see hereafter, as we advance in our historical studies, to how great a degree the Semitic and especially the Aryan nations were indebted to the Egyptians for the primary elements of their learning and culture.

**The Semitic Peoples.** — The Semitic family includes among its chief peoples the ancient Babylonians and Assyrians, the Hebrews, the Phœnicians, and the Arabians.

Some testimonies point to the hill country (Armenia) bordering the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates on the north, as the original abode of this family. Yet it would not be safe to say that that region was its primitive seat. We only know that by the dawn of history its various clans and tribes, whencesoever they may have come, had distributed themselves over the greater part of South-western Asia.

In the lower part of the Tigris-Euphrates valley they mingled with the Turanian Accadians already in possession of the soil, and formed the mixed people known as the Chaldæans, or Old Babylonians. In the upper portion of the Tigris valley, they established the great Assyrian empire, the princes of which for centuries held proud sway over most of the peoples between the hills of Persia and the Mediterranean.

At the foot of the Lebanon mountains, on the Mediterranean shore, another branch of the Semitic family developed early into a great maritime people, known as the Phœnicians, who carried the elements of Egyptian and Babylonian culture to the young Aryan nations of Europe.

Of the early movements of the ancestors of the Hebrews, we have some knowledge from their sacred writings. About eighteen or twenty centuries before our era, religious reasons, probably, led a Semitic clan, called the Abrahamic, to separate themselves from kindred tribes then dwelling near the head of the Persian Gulf, and to go out in search of new abodes. Their patriarch Abraham, who was inspired with a grand faith in the God Jehovah, whom he served, led the little company across the Mesopotamian plains, and up into the country afterwards known as Palestine. Famine and other circumstances drove his descendants forward into Egypt. After a long sojourn in that country, during which they had increased greatly in numbers, they returned to Palestine, drove out or exterminated the Canaanitish (chiefly Semitic) inhabitants of

the land, and grew into the great Hebrew nation, which was destined to exert a moulding influence upon the religion and civilization of the world.

It was not until the beginning of the Mediæval period that the Arabian tribes assumed any important part in the transactions of history. Then, under the name of Saracens, and as teachers of a new faith, called from its founder Mohammedanism, they issued from the deserts of the Arabian peninsula, and swiftly spread their authority and religion over large regions of the three continents of the eastern hemisphere.

We must not fail here to note that the three great historic religions of the world, — the Hebrew, the Christian, and the Mohammedan, — the three religions that alone (if we except that of Zoroaster) teach a belief in one God, arose among peoples belonging to the Semitic race. If races have missions, then we may say that the mission of this race has been to teach religion.

**The Aryan Family.** — The Aryan, or Indo-European, though probably the youngest, is the most widely scattered family of the White race. It includes among its members the ancient Hindus, Medes, and Persians, the classic Greeks and Romans, and the modern descendants of all these nations; also the Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic peoples of Europe, and their colonists that have peopled the New World, and taken possession of other parts of the earth.

**Migrations of the Aryans.** — The original seat of the Aryan peoples was, it is conjectured,<sup>1</sup> the highlands of Central Asia, east of the Caspian Sea and north of the Hindu Kush Mountains. This upland country, now for the most part arid and uninviting, seems to have been in remote times a delightful region, that drew forth unbounded praise from the early Aryan poets. Gradual changes in the climate, which rendered the country inhospitable, pressure of population, and religious disputes and wars caused the Aryan household, at a period that cannot be placed later than 3000 B.C., to begin to break up and scatter, and the different clans to set out in search of new dwelling-places.

<sup>1</sup> Some scholars seek the primitive home in Europe.

One branch of the family, called the Indo-Iranic, the ancestors of the Hindus and the Persians, turning from the primitive home, moved southward, and, for a long time after separation from the other members of the household, lived together as one family, united in a single faith and worship. But differences in religious belief arising, caused, so some suppose, by the teachings of the great prophet Zoroaster, the company was divided into two bands, which parted abruptly the one from the other. One of these, holding on their way to the south, climbed the snowy passes of the Hindu Kush, which lay in their path, and descending upon the plains beyond, drove out or subjugated the non-Aryan tribes they found occupying the land, and became the ancestors of the Hindus. The other company turned to the southwest, and spreading themselves over the table-lands of Iran, became the progenitors of the Medes and Persians.

About the time of these migrations to the south and southwest, other clans set their faces towards Europe. The journey of these families was long and eventful. The stream of migration that set in this direction was divided into two branches. One division, skirting probably the southern shore of the Euxine, and entering Europe by the way of the Hellespont, pushed themselves into the peninsulas of Greece and Italy, and founded the Greek and Italian states.

The second division seems to have passed to the north of the Black Sea, and crossing the rivers that lay in their path, to have poured in successive waves into Central Europe. The vanguard of these tribes are known as the Celts. After them came the Teutonic tribes, who crowded the former out on the westernmost edge of Europe—up into the corners of France and out upon the British Isles. These hard-pressed Celts are represented to-day by the Welsh, the Irish, and the Highland Scots. Behind the Teutonic peoples were the Slavonic folk, who pushed the former hard against the Celts, and, when they could urge them no farther to the west, finally settled down and became the ancestors of the Russians, Bohemians, Poles, Servians, and other kindred nations.

Although these migratory movements of the various clans and tribes of this wonderful Aryan family commenced in the early morning of history, some five thousand years ago, still we must not think of them as something past and unrelated to the present. These movements, begun in those remote times, are still going on. The overflow of the population of Europe into the different regions of the New World is simply a continuance of the outpourings of the primitive Aryan household into the surrounding countries.

Everywhere the other races and families have given way before the advance of the Aryan peoples, or have been absorbed by them. Having possessed themselves of the riches of the Hamitic and Semitic civilizations, — having made their own the wisdom of the Egyptians, the arts of the Assyrians, the religion of the Hebrews, — they have assumed the position of leaders and teachers among the families of mankind, and are rapidly spreading their arts and sciences and culture over the earth.

**Early Culture of the Aryans.** — One of the most fascinating studies of recent growth is that which reveals to us the customs and beliefs of the early Aryan peoples while their ancestors were yet living together as a single household, perhaps in Asia. Upon comparing the myths, legends, ballads, and nursery tales of the different Aryan peoples, we discover the curious fact that, under various disguises, they are the same. Jack the Giant-killer with his “seven-league boots” is identical with the Greek Hermes with his winged sandals. William Tell with his unerring aim is the Greek archer-god Apollo with his “twanging bow.” And many of our nursery tales are found to be identical even with those with which the Hindu children are amused. But the discovery should not surprise us. We and the Hindus are kinsmen, children of the same home ; so now, when after a long separation we meet, the tales we tell are the same, for they are the stories that were told around the common hearth-fire of our Aryan forefathers.

And when we compare certain words in different Aryan languages, we often find them alike in form and meaning. Thus take our word *father*. This word occurs with but little change of



form in several of the Aryan tongues: Sanscrit, *pitrī*; Persian, *padar*; Greek, *πατήρ* (*patēr*); Latin, *pater*; German, *vater*. Such words as this, preserved in modified forms in the strata of language, are to the philologist what fossils, buried in the strata of the earth, are to the geologist. They tell the past story of man. Thus the different Aryan forms of the word for *father* bear testimony to the fact that the remote ancestors of the now widely separated Aryan peoples once lived together and spoke a common tongue.

Our knowledge of the prehistoric culture of the Aryans, gained by the sciences of comparative philology and mythology, may be summed up as follows: They personified and worshipped the various forces and parts of the physical universe, such as the Sun, the Dawn, Fire, the Winds, the Clouds. The all-embracing sky they worshipped as the Heaven-Father (*Dyaus-Pitar*), who bore the same relation to the other deities as the later Greek Zeus bore to the other Grecian gods.

They were herdsmen and at least occasional farmers. "Their wealth was reckoned in cows, and cows were the circulating medium, with sheep and pigs for small change." They introduced the sheep, as well as the horse, into Europe. (The Turanian people whom they displaced had neither of these domestic animals.) They kept bees and got intoxicated upon a beverage made from the honey. "Their wheat was cut with the sickle, threshed and winnowed, and carried to mill in wagons fitted with wheels and axletrees. . . . Sewing and spinning were feminine occupations, and garments were woven out of sheep's wool. The art of tanning was also practised, and leather shoes were worn." (Fiske.)

They were fair builders, and navigated the rivers and inland seas of their region with canoes or skiffs. They rode in wagons, but did not ride horseback. They were versed in the art of war, and had made beginnings in astronomy and mathematics.

In social life they had advanced to that stage where the family is the unit of society. The father was the priest and absolute

lord of his house. The children were given names expressive of love and endearment. The families were united to form village-communities, ruled by a chief, or patriarch, who was assisted by a council of elders.

**Importance of Aryan Studies.** — This picture of life in the early Aryan home, the elements of which are gathered in so novel a way, is of the very greatest historical value and interest. In these customs and beliefs of the early Aryans, we discover the germs of many of the institutions of the classical Greeks and Romans, and of the nations of modern Europe. (Thus, in the council of elders around the village patriarch, political historians trace the beginnings of the senates of Greece and Rome and the national parliaments of later times. )

Just as the teachings of the parental roof mould the life and character of the children that go out from under its discipline, so have the influences of that early Aryan home shaped the habits, institutions, and character of those peoples and families that, as its children, went out to establish new homes in their "appointed habitations."

RACES OF MANKIND, WITH CHIEF FAMILIES AND PEOPLES.

BLACK RACE (Ethiopian, or Negro).	}	Tribes of Central and Southern Africa, the Papuans and the Australians. (This group includes two great divisions, the Negroid and Australoid.)		
YELLOW RACE (Turanian, or Mongolian).		}	(1) The Chinese, Burmese, Japanese, and other kindred peoples of Eastern Asia; (2) the Malays of Southeastern Asia, and the inhabitants of many of the Pacific islands; (3) the nomads (Tartars, Mongols, etc.) of Northern and Central Asia and of Eastern Russia; (4) the Turks, the Magyars, or Hungarians, the Finns and Lapps, and the Basques, in Europe; (5) the Esquimaux and the American Indians. Languages of these peoples are monosyllabic or agglutinative. (Note that the Malays and American Indians were formerly classified as distinct races.)	
WHITE RACE (Caucasian).	}		Hamitic Family	{ Egyptians, Libyans, Ethiopians.
		Semitic Family	{ Chaldeans (partly Turanian), Assyrians, Babylonians, Canaanites (chiefly), Phœnicians, Hebrews, Arabs.	
		Aryan, or Indo-European, Family	Indo-Iranic Branch .	{ Hindus, Medes, Persians.
			Græco-Italic Branch	{ Greeks, Romans.
			Celtic Branch . . .	{ Gauls, Britons, Scots (Irish), Picts.
Teutonic Branch . .	{ High Germans, Low Germans, Scandinavians.			
Slavonic Branch . .	{ Russians, Poles, etc.			

The peoples of modern Germany are the descendants of various Germanic tribes. The Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes represent the Scandinavian branch of the Teutonic family. The Irish, the Welsh, the Scotch Highlanders, and the Bretons of Brittany (anciently *Armorica*), in France, are the present representatives of the ancient Celts. The French, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians have sprung, in the main, from a blending of the Celts, the ancient Romans, and the Germanic tribes that thrust themselves within the limits of the Roman Empire in the West. The English are the descendants of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes (Teutonic tribes), slightly modified by interminglings with the Danes and Normans (see *Mediæval and Modern History*, pp. 169-178).



# PART I.

## THE EASTERN NATIONS AND GREECE.

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### SECTION I.—THE EASTERN NATIONS.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### POLITICAL HISTORY OF ANCIENT EGYPT.

(From unknown antiquity to 527 B.C.)

**Egypt and the Nile.**— Herodotus, who often used happy phrases, called Egypt “the gift of the Nile.” Before historic times, what is now the Great Sahara was covered by the waters of the Atlantic. Geologic changes at last lifted the rocky sea-floor—covered, for the most part, with a heavy mantle of sand—and it became the Libyan desert. The Nile then flowed through a long, narrow, hill-bordered valley to the Mediterranean, which in those early times formed a deep bay where now is Lower Egypt. At each annual rise of the river, caused by the tropical summer rains among the Abyssinian mountains, a thin layer of sediment was deposited over the narrow strip of submerged land along either bank of the stream.<sup>1</sup> Not until from forty to seventy feet of sediment had been laid down upon the limestone floor of the valley did it become the seat of that wonderful civilization whose monuments have come down to us; although from fragments of pottery found in the very lowest strata of the river sediment, we

<sup>1</sup> The valley has a varying breadth of from two to eleven miles. The rate of the fluvial deposit is from three to five inches in a century. The country at Thebes, as shown by the accumulations about the monuments, has been raised seven feet during the last seventeen hundred years.

believe the valley to have been occupied by man many ages before that time.

Besides covering with a deep soil the bottom of its narrow valley, the Nile has also built up at its mouth a great delta, through which it now seeks the sea by several different channels. This delta country was known to the ancients as Lower Egypt; while the valley proper, reaching from the head of the delta to the First Cataract, a distance of six hundred miles, was called Upper Egypt.

**Inundation of the Nile.**—Through the same means by which Egypt was originally created is the land each year still renewed and fertilized. The Nile begins to rise in its lower parts late in June, and by the end of September, when the inundation has attained its greatest height, the country presents the appearance of an inland sea, with the villages of the natives, which are built upon artificial hills or protected by dikes, rising like little islands above the water. The ordinary rise at the first cataract is about forty feet, and at Cairo from twenty-four to twenty-five feet.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of November the river has returned to its bed, and the fields, over which has been spread a film of rich earth, present the appearance of black mud-flats. Usually the plow is run lightly over the soft surface, but in some cases the grain is sown upon the undisturbed deposit, and simply trampled in by flocks of sheep and goats driven over it. In a few weeks the entire land, so recently a flooded plain, is overspread with a sea of verdure, which forms a striking contrast with the desert sands and barren hills that rim the valley.

**Climate.**—In Lower Egypt, near the sea, the rainfall in the winter is abundant; but the climate of Upper Egypt is all but rainless, only a few slight showers falling throughout the year. This dryness of the Egyptian air is what has preserved through so many thousands of years, in such wonderful freshness of color and

<sup>1</sup> In ancient times the distribution of the water was aided by an extensive system of dikes, canals, and reservoirs. Through neglect, many of the old canals are now choked with sand and the reservoirs broken, so that not more than two-thirds of the land formerly under cultivation is to-day tilled.







with such sharpness of outline, the numerous paintings and sculptures of the palaces and tombs of the Pharaohs.

The southern line of Egypt only just touches the tropics; still the climate, influenced by the wide and hot deserts that hem the valley, is semi-tropical in character. The fruits of the tropics and the cereals of the temperate zone grow luxuriantly. Thus favored in climate as well as in the matter of irrigation, Egypt became in early times the granary of the East. To it less favored countries, when stricken by famine—a calamity so common in the East in regions dependent upon the rainfall—looked for food, as did the families of Israel during drought and failure of crops in Palestine.

**Cataracts of the Nile.**—About seven hundred miles from the Mediterranean a low ledge of rocks, stretching across the Nile, forms the first obstruction to navigation in passing up the river. The rapids found at this point are termed the First Cataract. Six other cataracts occur in the next seven hundred miles of the river's course. The sacred islands of Elephantine and Philæ lie, the former just below, and the latter just above, the First Cataract. One hundred miles below Elephantine, the limestone hills recede from the river in such a way as to form an amphitheatral plain about twelve miles across. This region is called the Thebaid, and is now filled with the ruins of "hundred-gated Thebes."

South of the First Cataract lay Ethiopia, a land of very shadowy boundaries. The northern part of the region was debatable ground between the Ethiopians and the Egyptians; yet during the best days of the Pharaohs they extended their authority permanently far beyond the first rapids, as is attested by the ruins that line the banks of the Upper Nile—the designation given the river above the First Cataract.

**Dynasties and Chronology.**—The kings, or Pharaohs, that reigned in Egypt from the earliest times till the conquest of the country by Alexander (B.C. 332), are grouped into thirty-one dynasties. Thirty of these we find in the lists of Manetho, an Egyptian priest who lived in the third century B.C., and who wrote a history of Egypt, compiled from the manuscripts kept in the

archives of the Egyptian temples. Unfortunately, all of this chronicle is lost, save mere fragments preserved in the works of later writers. In connection with each dynasty, Manetho gives the length of the reign of the family, and usually the names of the kings comprising it.<sup>1</sup>

We cannot assign a positive date to the beginning of the First Dynasty; for Egyptologists are at a loss to know whether to consider the dynasties of Manetho's list as all successive or in part contemporaneous. Thus, it is held by some scholars that several of these families were reigning at the same time in This, Elephantine, Thebes, Memphis, Tanis, and Saïs — the different capitals of Upper and Lower Egypt; while others think that they all reigned at different epochs, and that the sum of the lengths of the several dynasties gives us the true date of the beginning of the era of Menes. Furthermore, Manetho made no account of the overlapping of reigns; for it was the custom for a Pharaoh, in the latter years of his reign, to share the government with the son who was to succeed him, and then this son, in his inscriptions, reckoned his reign from the time of his first participation in the government. Accordingly, Mariette and Lenormant place the beginning of the First Dynasty at 5004 B.C., and others still earlier,<sup>2</sup> while Poole and Wilkinson put it at about 2700 B.C. The constantly growing evidence of the monuments is in favor of the higher figures.<sup>3</sup>

As in journeying up the Nile the traveller passes without delay

<sup>1</sup> In addition to Manetho's list, we have that of the so-called Turin Papyrus. This document, however, besides being badly mutilated, gives no names after the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the date of its compilation. The lists furnished by the monumental inscriptions are very incomplete, and possess little or no chronological value.

<sup>2</sup> A comparison of authorities will be interesting. Böckh gives as the date of Menes 5702; Unger, 5613; Brugsch, 4455; Lauth, 4157; Lepsius, 3852; Bunsen, 3623 — later 3059; Poole, 2717; Wilkinson, 2691.

<sup>3</sup> "The scholars who have attempted to compress the dates given by Manetho have never yet been able to produce one single monument to prove that two dynasties named in his lists as successive were contemporary. On the

the long monotonous reaches of the river, and stops only when his attention is arrested by a group of famous pyramids or the ruins of some celebrated temple, so shall we pass without notice the long uneventful periods in these thirty-one dynasties, and stop only when we reach some great name, some important conquest, or some significant event. These shall be our landmarks along this great dynastic stream, which flows through more than half the historic centuries of the world.

**Menes, Founder of the Old Empire.** — Menes is the first kingly personage, shadowy and indistinct in form, that we discover in the first dawn of Egyptian history. This king holds the same relation to the beginnings of political life and organized society in the valley of the Nile that Sargon I. sustains to these same matters in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates (see p. 60). Tradition makes him the founder of Memphis, near the head of the Delta, the site of which capital he secured against the inundations of the Nile by vast dikes and various engineering works. To him is ascribed the achievement of first consolidating the numerous petty principalities of Lower Egypt into a single state, known as the Old Empire, which existed with varying fortunes for at least a thousand years.

**The Pyramid Kings** (about 2700 B.C.). — The kings of the Fourth Dynasty, who reigned at Memphis, are called the Pyramid-builders.<sup>1</sup> "With them the real history of Egypt begins." Tradition and the monuments here unite their testimony. Suphis (Khufu) I., the Cheops of the Greeks, was the first great builder. To him we can now positively ascribe the building of the Great Pyramid, the largest of the Gizeh group; for his name has been found upon some of the stones, — painted on them by his workmen before the blocks were taken from the quarries.

contrary, there are abundant proofs, collected by very many Egyptologists, to convince us that all the royal races enumerated by the Sebennyitic priest occupied the throne in succession." — MARIETTE.

<sup>1</sup> Not that they were the only Pyramid-builders, but because they erected the largest of the pyramids (see p. 42).

Others of this famous group of pyramids were raised by Khafra and Menkara, successors of Cheops. To some king of this family is also ascribed, by some authorities, the sculpture of the Sphinx at the foot of the Great Pyramid. The most astonishing feature of the monuments of these early Pharaohs is the remarkable perfection of the sciences and arts exhibited in their construction.

These mountains of stone heaped together by the Pyramid kings are proof that they were cruel oppressors of their people, and burdened them with useless labor upon these monuments of their ambition. Tradition tells how the very memory of these monarchs was hated by the people. Herodotus says that the Egyptians did not like even to speak the names of the builders of the two largest pyramids. The statues of Khafra, the builder of the second pyramid of the Gizeh group, have been discovered, broken into small pieces, at the bottom of a well near the Sphinx, into which, as is conjectured by some, the enraged people had thrown them during a political revolution, soon after his death.

**The Twelfth Dynasty** (about 2300 B.C.).—After the Sixth Dynasty,<sup>1</sup> Egypt seems to have become divided into a number of small kingdoms, of which we know practically nothing, save the names of some of the kings. For several centuries the land is lost from view. When finally the valley emerges from the obscurity of this period, the old capital Memphis has receded into the background, and the city of Thebes has taken its place as the seat of the royal power.

<sup>1</sup> The really great name of this family is that of the conqueror Pepi, but tradition and romance have lifted into greatest prominence the name of Queen Nitocris, who is represented as being the last of the house. Nitocris is the heroine of Egyptian legend, and the original of the Cinderella of fairy romance. But, notwithstanding the myths that have gathered about her name, it is believed that we may regard her as a real historical personage, and think of her as the only female sovereign who ever sat as a sole ruler upon the throne of the ancient Pharaohs.

The period of the Twelfth Dynasty, a line of Theban kings, is one of the brightest in Egyptian history. Many monuments scattered throughout the country perpetuate the fame of the Amenemhats and Usurtasens of this illustrious house. Egyptian civilization is regarded by many as having during this period reached the highest perfection to which it ever attained.

Under Usurtasen III., a ruler of marked military capacity, all the valley of the Nile between the First and the Second Cataract, for the possession of which the Egyptian princes had long contended with negro and Cushite (Ethiopian) tribes, was made a part of the empire of the Pharaohs.

The name of Amenemhat III. has been rendered especially well-known through being connected with supposed great engineering works — the celebrated reservoir known to the classic writers as Lake Mœris — in the present district of the Fayoom;<sup>1</sup> and with the famous and mysterious Labyrinth, which Herodotus thought to surpass even the Pyramids. The historian's account

<sup>1</sup> This region, which is essentially an oasis, embraces a remarkable depression, about four hundred square miles in extent, in the desert to the west of the Nile, about fifty miles above the apex of the Delta. Some portions of these Egyptian Netherlands are depressed more than one hundred feet below the level of the Nile. It has been believed, chiefly on the authority of Herodotus (see Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Book II. chap. 149), that Amenemhat III., acting upon the hint given by nature, here constructed an enormous reservoir, covering about ninety square miles, for the reception of the surplus waters of the inundation, which were drawn off into the basin through an opening, partially artificial, in the ridge separating the depression from the river plain. By means of a system of canals and flood-gates, the waters, it is said, were distributed as needed over the depressed lands, as well as over a considerable district along the western edge of the Nile valley.

But "recent explorations," writes M. Maspero, "have proved that the dikes by which this pretended reservoir was bounded are modern works, erected probably within the last two hundred years. I no longer believe that Lake Mœris ever existed. If Herodotus did actually visit the Fayoom, it was probably in summer, at the time of the high Nile, when the whole district presents the appearance of an inland sea. What he took for the shores of this lake were the embankments which divided it into basins and acted as highways between the various towns." — *Egyptian Archaeology*, p. 36.

of the former work has been discredited by some Egyptologists, and his description of the latter, which was probably only a palace, was doubtless overwrought.

Particularly interesting monuments dating from this Twelfth Dynasty are the rock-sepulchres of Beni-Hassan. They were constructed by a family of hereditary provincial governors, or great feudal lords, who flourished under the earlier kings of the house. The elaborate sculptures and paintings upon the walls of these rock-chambers form a most instructive picture of the life and manners of the times.

**The Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings** (from about 2100 to 1650 B.C.).—Soon after the bright period of the Twelfth Dynasty, Egypt suffered a great eclipse. Under the kings of the Fourteenth Dynasty, the royal power declined, and the country was divided apparently into several petty principalities, and thus prevented from using its undivided strength to repel invasion.

Such united effort was needed ; for just at this time the nomadic tribes of Syria, being hard-pushed, perhaps by the growing empires of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, crossed the eastern frontiers of Egypt, took possession of the inviting pasture-lands of the Delta, and established there the Empire of the Shepherd Kings. These rulers gradually extended their authority up the Nile, and the Theban kings were forced to seek refuge in Ethiopia — a country, as we have already learned, lying across the Upper Nile.

These Asiatic intruders, "Tartars of the South," as they have been called, were violent and barbarous, and destroyed or mutilated the monuments of the conquered Egyptians. But gradually they were transformed by the civilization with which they were in contact, and in time they adopted the manners, customs, and culture of the Egyptians. Then they seem to have set themselves to the work of restoring the monuments they had mutilated, and of erecting new structures.

It was probably during the supremacy of the Hyksos that the families of Israel found a refuge in Lower Egypt. They received a kind reception from the Shepherd Kings, not only because they



were of the same pastoral habits, but also probably because of near kinship in race.

At last these intruders, after they had ruled in the valley four hundred years (some say two hundred), were expelled by the Theban kings, and driven back into Asia. This occurred about 1650 B.C. The episode of the Shepherd Kings in Egypt derives great importance from the fact that these Asiatic conquerors were one of the mediums through which Egyptian civilization was transmitted to the Phœnicians, who, through their wide commercial relations, spread the same among all the early nations of the Mediterranean area. Thus Egypt became indirectly the instructor of Greece and Rome.

And further, the Hyksos' conquest was an advantage to Egypt itself. The conquerors possessed political capacity, and they did for Egypt just what the Norman conquerors did for England — gave it a strong, centralized government. They made Egypt a great monarchy, and laid the basis of the power and glory of the mighty Pharaohs of the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Dynasty.

**Amosis, Founder of the New Empire** (about 1650 B.C.). — The revolt which drove the Hyksos from the country was led by Amosis, or Ahmes, a descendant of the Theban kings. He delivered the entire valley between the cataracts and the sea from the invaders, and restored the temples and monuments that had suffered from the rudeness of the conquerors. He was the first king of what is known as the Eighteenth Dynasty, probably the greatest race of kings, it has been said, that ever reigned upon the earth.

The most eventful period of Egyptian history, covered by what is called the New Empire, now opens. Architecture and learning seem to have recovered at a bound from their long depression under the domination of the Shepherd Kings. To free his empire from the danger of another invasion from Asia, Amosis determined to subdue the Syrian and Mesopotamian tribes. This foreign policy, followed out by his successors, shaped many of the events of their reigns.

**Thothmes III.** (about 1600 B.C.). — Thothmes has been called

“the Alexander of Egyptian history.” He was at least a great warrior, and during his reign the frontiers of the empire reached their greatest expansion. His authority extended from the oases of the Libyan desert to the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates. He built a strong fortress upon the latter river at Carchemish, added both Nineveh and Babylon to his kingdom, and exacted tribute and hostages from the various Mesopotamian princes. Tablets cut in the rocks, and various monuments commemorative of his conquests, are scattered from Algeria, in Northern Africa, to the Armenian Mountains, in Asia, and are found far up the Nile, in Abyssinia.

Thothmes was also a magnificent builder. His architectural works in the valley of the Nile were almost numberless. There was scarcely a city in Egypt that he did not decorate with temple or palace or obelisk. He built also a great part of the Temple of Karnak, at Thebes, the remains of which form the most majestic ruin in the world. All his monuments are literally covered with sculptures and inscriptions—records of his numerous expeditions and great works. His obelisks stand to-day in Constantinople and Rome and London and New York.

**Amunoph (Amenophis) III.**—This name stands next after that of Thothmes III. as one of the great sovereigns of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Although, like his rival, a famous warrior, still it is the remains of his splendid buildings, scattered over the sites of the ancient capitals of Egypt, that have given him so prominent a place in Egyptian history. He added to the Temple of Karnak, and erected portions of the superb Palace of Luxor, joining it to the former edifice by a grand avenue lined with a thousand colossal sphinxes. To him, too, is ascribed the erection at Thebes of the celebrated colossus known as the Vocal Memnon.

**The Nineteenth Dynasty** (about 1400–1280 B.C.).—The Pharaohs of the Nineteenth Dynasty rivalled those of the Eighteenth in their fame as conquerors and builders. It is their deeds and works, in connection with those of the preceding dynasty, that have given Egypt such a name and place in history.



The dynasty was founded by Rameses I., whose fame, as Brugsch says, "consists chiefly in the place he holds in the historical series, as the father of a very celebrated son, and the grandfather of one who was covered with glory and sung of as a hero to the latest ages." The son and grandson here referred to were Seti I. and Rameses II. To each of these great names a separate paragraph must be given.

**Seti I.** (about 1398 B.C.).—One of the most important of Seti's wars was that against the Hittites (*Khita*, in the inscriptions) and their allies. The Hittites were a powerful, non-Semitic people, whose capital was Carchemish on the Euphrates, and whose strength and influence were now so great as to be a threat to Egypt. Marching against these formidable enemies, Seti overcame their army with great slaughter, and returned to Egypt with his chariot garnished with the heads of several of their chiefs. In other campaigns he carried terror to new foes on the west and the south of Egypt.

But Seti's deeds as a warrior are eclipsed by his achievements as a builder. He constructed the main part of what is perhaps the most impressive edifice ever raised by man—the world-renowned "Hall of Columns" in the Temple of Karnak, at Thebes. He also cut for himself in the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings, at the same place, the most beautiful and elaborate of all the rock-sepulchres of the Pharaohs. In addition to these works and numerous other architectural constructions, he began a canal to unite the Red Sea and the Nile—an undertaking which was completed by his son, who, while yet a mere child, was, according to a custom of the Pharaohs already mentioned (see p. 18), associated with his father in the government.

**Rameses II.** (about 1370 B.C.).—Rameses II., surnamed the Great, was the Sesostris of the Greeks. His is the most prominent name of the Nineteenth Dynasty. Ancient writers, in fact, accorded him the first place among all the Egyptian sovereigns, and told mythical and most exaggerated stories of his conquests and achievements. His long reign, embracing sixty-seven years,



PORTRAIT-STATUE OF RAMESES II.

was, indeed, well occupied with military expeditions and the superintendence of great architectural works.

The chief of his wars were those against the Hittites, of whom we have just spoken in connection with Seti I. In his second campaign against this foe was fought the great battle of Kadesh, on the Orontes, in Northern Syria. In this fight, Rameses, separated from his army and surrounded, as declares the Egyptian Iliad which celebrates the exploit, by twenty-five hundred chariots of the enemy, performed superhuman deeds, and through his own personal prowess achieved a great victory.



RAMESES II. RETURNING IN TRIUMPH FROM SYRIA, with his chariot garnished with the heads of his enemies. (From the monuments of Karnak.)

Time and again is Rameses found with his host of war-chariots in the country of the Hittites, but he evidently fails to break their power; for we find him at last concluding with them a celebrated treaty, in which the chief of the Hittites is called "The Great King of the Khita," and is formally recognized as in every respect the equal of the king of Egypt. Later, Rameses marries a daughter of the Hittite king. All this means that the Pharaohs had met their peers in the princes of the Hittites, and that they could no longer hope to become masters of Western Asia. Indeed, the empire of the Pharaohs had already passed its culmination, and all Rameses' efforts were directed to upholding the fortunes of a declining state.

It was probably the fear of an invasion by the tribes of Syria that led him to reduce to a position of grinding servitude the Semitic peoples that under former dynasties had been permitted to settle in Lower Egypt; for this Nineteenth Dynasty, to which Rameses II. belongs, was the new king (dynasty) that arose "which knew not Joseph" (Ex. i. 8), and oppressed the children of Israel. Especially was it under this monarch that their "lives were made bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field." Papyri recently interpreted tell us that the Hebrews were the builders of the treasure-cities of "Pithom and Raamses," as recorded in Exodus.

Besides enslaving these Semitic tribes that migratory movements had brought into the Delta region, Rameses pressed to the work on his various edifices great multitudes of captives taken in his numerous wars, as well as negroes obtained by "man-hunting expeditions" into Central Africa. The native Egyptian peasants were also vexed by heartless taskmasters, taxes, extortions, and cruel punishments. As Dr. Smith observes, "The epithet 'Great' is, as usual in history, but the tribute rendered by the weak judgment of men to arrogant despotism and barbaric pomp. . . . We may venture to call him the Louis XIV. of the Egyptian monarchy; and 'after him came the deluge.'" It was during the reign of his son Menephtha that the Exodus took place (about 1300 B.C.).

**Psammetichus I.** (666-612).—We pass without comment a long period of several centuries, marked, indeed, by great vicissitudes in the fortunes of the Egyptian monarchs, yet characterized throughout by a sure and rapid decline in the power and splendor of their empire.

During the latter part of this period Egypt was tributary to Assyria or Ethiopia. But the Ethiopian authority was thrown off, and soon after, about 666 B.C., when the Babylonians in concert with other peoples arose in revolt against the Assyrian king, Egypt, taking advantage of the opportunity, detached herself from the empire, and a native prince, Psammetichus (Psammetik) by name, with the aid of Ionian and Carian mercenaries



from Asia Minor, expelled the Assyrian garrisons, and succeeded in consolidating the twenty satrapies, or provinces, into which the Assyrian conquerors had divided the country, into a single well-ordered and powerful kingdom. Psammetichus thus became the founder of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty.

The reign of this monarch marks a new era in Egyptian history. He effected an entire and radical change in the policy of the government. Hitherto Egypt had secluded herself from the world behind barriers of jealousy, race, and pride. But Psammetichus being himself, it seems, of non-Egyptian origin, and owing his throne chiefly to the swords of Greek soldiers, was led to reverse the policy of the past, and to throw the valley open to the commerce and influences of the world. His capital, Saïs, on the Canopic branch of the Nile, forty miles from the Mediterranean, was filled with Greek citizens; and Greek mercenaries were employed in his armies. Diodorus says: "He loved Greece so much that he caused his children to be taught its language. He was the first of the Egyptian kings who opened to other nations emporia for their merchandise, and gave security to voyagers; for his predecessors had rendered Egypt inaccessible to foreigners by putting some to death, and condemning others to slavery."

This change of policy, occurring at just the period when the rising states of Greece and Rome were shaping their institutions, was a most significant event. Egypt became the University of the Mediterranean nations. From this time forward Greek philosophers, as Pythagoras and Plato, are represented as becoming pupils of the Egyptian priests; and without question the learning and philosophy of the ancient Egyptians exerted a profound influence upon the quick, susceptible mind of the Hellenic race, that was, in its turn, to become the teacher of the world.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quite recently the ruins of the ancient Greek city of Naucratis, which was the centre of the Greek population in the Delta, have been discovered, and quite thoroughly excavated. The importance of the discovery, in the evidence it affords of the influence of Egyptian upon Greek art and culture, can hardly be overrated. It supplies another connecting link between the history of the

The liberal policy of Psammetichus, while resulting in great advantage to foreign nations, brought a heavy misfortune upon his own. Displeased with the position assigned Greek mercenaries in the army, the native Egyptian soldiers revolted, and two hundred thousand of the troops, embracing the larger part of the warrior class of society, which ranked next in importance to the sacerdotal order, seceded in a body, and emigrated to Ethiopia, whence no inducement that Psammetichus offered could persuade them to return.

**Necho II.** (612-596 B.C.). — The son of Psammetichus, Necho II., the Pharaoh-Necho of the Bible, followed the liberal policy marked out by his father. To facilitate commerce, and to unite his great war-fleets on the Nile and the Red Sea, he attempted to re-open the old canal dug by Seti I. and his son, which had become unnavigable. Necho proposed to make it wide and deep enough to float his great triremes. After the loss of one hundred and twenty thousand workmen in the prosecution of the undertaking, Necho was constrained to abandon it; Herodotus says, on account of an unfavorable oracle.

Necho then fitted out an exploring expedition for the circumnavigation of Africa, in hopes of finding a possible passage for his fleets from the Red Sea to the Nile by a water channel already opened by nature, and to which the priests and oracles could interpose no objections. The expedition, we have reason to believe, actually accomplished the feat of sailing around the continent; for Herodotus, in his account of the enterprise, says that the voyagers upon their return reported that, when they were rounding the cape, the sun was on their right hand (to the north).

East and that of the West. Ernest Gardner, in his report of his work, says: "The influence of Egypt flowed through Naucratis to Greece, and the long-perfected models of Egyptian skill roused the emulation, if not always the imitation, of the young and quickly rising art of Greece." Naucratis was at its height of prosperity in the 6th century B.C., although it certainly existed as early as the beginning of the 7th century. King Amasis (see p. 31) broke up all the other Greek settlements in the Delta, and confined the Greek traders to Naucratis.

This feature of the report, which led Herodotus to disbelieve it, is to us the very strongest evidence possible that the voyage was really performed. It is said, that the expedition was absent three years; and that, their provisions failing, the sailors landed each summer, sowed fields of grain, and, after waiting for the same to ripen, harvested the crop, and then resumed their voyage.

**The Last of the Pharaohs.**—Before the close of his reign, Necho had come into collision with Nabopolassar, king of Babylon. The armies of that monarch, led by his son Nebuchadnezzar, wrested from the Egyptian king the strong fortress of Carchemish, that watched the Euphrates.<sup>1</sup> In this event was written the fate of the empire of the Nile. The Pharaohs were forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Babylonian kings.

Under Amasis (571–527 B.C.), however, Egypt, although part of the time a vassal state to Babylon, enjoyed a period of unusual prosperity. Diodorus says that at this time Egypt held eighteen thousand cities; Herodotus makes the number twenty thousand. Villages and mere clusters of buildings were doubtless included in this enumeration. Yet, although the country had a large population, we must bear in mind that her military strength had been seriously weakened by the secession of the warrior class in the reign of Psammetichus. She could no longer offer formidable resistance to Asiatic conquerors.

In 527 B.C., the Persian king Cambyses invaded the valley, defeated and put to death the successor of Amasis—his son, Psammetichus III.—and established the Persian authority throughout the country. The Egyptians, however, were restive under this foreign yoke, and, after a little more than a century, succeeded in throwing it off; but the country was again subjugated by the Persian king, Artaxerxes III. (about 340 B.C.), and from that time on to our own day no native prince has ever sat upon the throne of the Pharaohs. Long before the Persian conquest, the Prophet Ezekiel, foretelling the destruction of Egypt,

<sup>1</sup> Necho had captured Carchemish only a few years before this, probably in 608 B.C.

had declared, "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."<sup>1</sup>

Upon the extension of the power of the Macedonians over the East (333 B.C.), Egypt willingly exchanged masters; and for three centuries the valley was the seat of the renowned Græco-Egyptian Empire of the Ptolemies, which lasted until the Romans annexed the region to their all-absorbing empire (30 B.C.).

"The mission of Egypt among the nations was fulfilled; it had lit the torch of civilization in ages inconceivably remote, and had passed it on to other peoples of the West."

Reflecting upon the causes which paved the way for Egypt's decline and fall, the Egyptologist Brugsch observes: "Strong as is the impression of pity made by the sight of this miserable end to the mighty empire of the Pharaohs, yet the temples and edifices built to last hundreds of thousands of years could offer no resistance to the perishableness of all things earthly; for it was not in their everlasting stones that the Pharaohs should have established their imperishable monuments. The harassed and exhausted people, persecuted with war and oppression, a plaything for the caprice and ambition of their princes, easily broke their faith when they no longer received their reward in the fidelity and affection of their rulers. Degraded into the mere means to a selfish end, it was the same to them whom they served, whether Assyrian, Persian, or Greek. No foreign prince could prove worse to them than Pharaoh and his court."

<sup>1</sup> Ez. xxx. 13.



CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE AND SUMMARY OF EGYPTIAN HISTORY.

	B.C.
Old Empire (embracing first sixteen dynasties).	Menes, legendary founder of the empire . . . . . (?)
	Great Pyramids built by kings of Fourth Dynasty, about 2700
	Twelfth Dynasty . . . . . " 2300
	Hyksos (Asiatic invaders) overthrow the Old Empire . . . . . " 2100
Middle Empire: rule of the Shepherd Kings (Seventeenth Dynasty).	Shepherd Kings become masters of Egypt . . . . . " 2100
	Monuments of early kings destroyed or mutilated. Dark Ages of Egyptian history. During the latter part of this period the Children of Israel settle in the land. Period closes with expulsion of Hyksos by Amosis, a Theban prince . . . . . " 1650
New Empire (embracing 18th-26th dynasties).	Amosis establishes New Empire . . . . . " 1650
	* * * * *
	Thothmes III., warrior and builder, reigns . . . . . " 1600
	* * * * *
	Amunoph III., great builder . . . . . " 1550
	* * * * *
	Rameses I. establishes Nineteenth Dynasty . . . . . " 1400
	Seti I. . . . . " 1398
	Rameses II. the Great . . . . . " 1370
	Menephthah (son of Rameses II.), Pharaoh of the Exodus . . . . . " 1320
	* * * * *
	Sheshonk (Shishak) . . . . . " 993-972
	Psammetichus I. (according to Brugsch) . . . . . 666-612
Necho (Pharaoh-Necho) . . . . . 612-596	
Psammetichus II. . . . . 596-590	
Apries (Pharaoh-Hophra) . . . . . 590-571	
Amasis . . . . . 571-527	
Psammetichus III. (reigned six months) . . . . . 527	
Later History. . . . .	Egypt a dependency of Persian Empire . . . . . 527-404
	Under native princes (28th-30th dynasties) . . . . . 404-340?
	Persian authority restored (31st Dynasty) . . . . . 340?-332
	Alexander conquers Egypt . . . . . 332
	Ptolemies rule in Egypt . . . . . 323-30
Conquest of country by Romans . . . . . 30	

## CHAPTER II.

RELIGION, MONUMENTS, ARTS, AND SCIENCES OF THE  
ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

**Classes of Society.**—Egyptian society was divided into three great classes, or orders,—priests, soldiers, and common people; the last embracing shepherds, husbandmen, and artisans. These divisions are more properly designated as classes than castes; for the characteristic features of the latter, as existing among the Hindus, are that the members “must abstain from certain forbidden occupations, contract no alliance beyond the limits of the caste, and must continue to practise the profession of their fathers”; whereas among the Egyptians there were no such restrictions laid upon the two principal classes. The priest might become a soldier, and the soldier a priest, or the same person might be both at once.

**The Priesthood.**—The sacerdotal order formed a perfect hierarchy, consisting of a high priest, of prophets, scribes, keepers of the sacred robes and animals, sacred sculptors, masons and embalmers, and a host of attendants and functionaries to care for the temples, and perform the complicated ceremonies of the national worship. They enjoyed freedom from taxation, and met the expenses of the temple services by the income of the sacred lands, which embraced one-third of the soil of the country.

The priests were extremely scrupulous in the care of their persons. They bathed twice by day and as often by night, and shaved the entire body every third day. Their inner clothing was linen, woollen garments being thought unclean; their diet was plain and even abstemious, in order that, as Plutarch says, “their bodies might sit light as possible about their souls.”

**The Warrior Class.** — Next to the priesthood in rank and honor stood the military order. Like the priests, the soldiers formed a landed class. They held one-third of the soil of Egypt. To each soldier was given a tract of about eight acres, exempt from all taxes. They were carefully trained in their profession, and there was no more effective soldiery in ancient times than that which marched beneath the standards of the Pharaohs.

The military force of the nation numbered, in the best days of the empire, about five hundred thousand men, increased by allies and mercenaries, in case of special urgency, to more than one million. The army was made up of infantry, cavalry, and charioteers; the archers of the first being the most effective branch of the service. The regiments are sometimes represented upon the monuments as moving in a heavy mass, like the Macedonian phalanx. The Egyptian phalanx consisted of ten thousand men drawn up in a solid square, with one hundred men on each face. Protected with immense shields, this body, like its Macedonian successor, was practically impenetrable, and when moving over level ground bore down everything before it.

The navy of the Egyptians was composed of Phœnician ships and sailors; the Egyptians themselves hated the sea. Records have been discovered of naval engagements between the Egyptian fleets and their enemies upon the Mediterranean more than two thousand years before our era.

**Religious Doctrines.** — Attached to the chief temples of the Egyptians were colleges for the training of the sacerdotal order. These institutions were the repositories of the wisdom of the Egyptians. This learning was open only to the initiated few. The papyri have revealed to us — more favored than the uninitiated of those times — the jealously guarded mysteries of Isis.

The unity of God was the central doctrine in this esoteric system. They gave to this Supreme Being the very same name by which he was known to the Hebrews — *Nuk Pu Nuk*, "I am that I am."<sup>1</sup> The sacred manuscripts say, "He is the one living and

<sup>1</sup> "It is evident what a new light this discovery throws on the sublime

true God, who was begotten by himself. . . . He who has existed from the beginning, . . . who has made all things, and was not himself made."<sup>1</sup> To this Being were given many names, to express the modes of his manifestations; just as we give different names to the Deity—as Creator, Eternal, Father—to indicate the various relations he sustains to the universe and to ourselves.<sup>2</sup>

The great multitude, of course, did not and could not rise to this lofty monotheism; to them the different parts of nature, as the sun and moon, and the various animals, were distinct gods, instead of parts of a great whole animated by a universal soul.

**Osiris, Isis, and Horus.**—The Egyptian divinities of the popular mythology were frequently grouped in triads. First in importance among these groups was that formed by Osiris, Isis (his wife and sister), and Horus, their son. The members of this triad were worshipped throughout Egypt. The Egyptians had whole libraries of myths and legends, some of them very beautiful and significant, respecting these favorite divinities.<sup>3</sup> Many of the other triads were composed of local deities.

passage in Exodus iii. 14; where Moses, whom we may suppose to have been initiated into this formula, is sent both to his people and to Pharaoh to proclaim the true God by this very title, and to declare that the God of the highest Egyptian theology was also the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. The case is parallel to that of Paul at Athens."—SMITH, *Ancient History of the East*, p. 196, note.

<sup>1</sup> Lenormant, *Ancient History of the East*, Vol. I. p. 318.

<sup>2</sup> The inferior deities were likewise given many designations. Isis was called "the goddess with ten thousand names."

<sup>3</sup> "The peculiar character of Osiris, his coming upon earth for the benefit of mankind, with the title of 'Manifestor of good and truth,' his being put to death by the malice of the evil one, his burial and resurrection, and his becoming the judge of the dead, are the most interesting features of the Egyptian religion. This was the great mystery; and this myth and his worship were of the earliest times, and universal in Egypt. He was to every Egyptian the great Judge of the dead; and it is evident that Moses abstained from making any very pointed allusion to the future state of man because it would have recalled the well-known Judge of the dead and all the funeral ceremonies of Egypt, and have brought back the thoughts of the mixed mul-

The possible origin of the triad, or threefold grouping of the gods, which is a feature characterizing many, if not all, polytheistic religions, is that anthropomorphic conception of the divinities which attributes to them all human distinctions, and creates a celestial family, composed, like the human, of father, mother, and son.

**Set, or Typhon.** — The god Set (called Typhon by the Greek writers), the principle of evil, was the Satan of Egyptian mythology. While the good and beneficent Osiris was symbolized by the Nile, the malignant Typhon was emblemized by the terrors and barrenness of the desert; by a frightful serpent, slain by Horus; and, again, by the hippopotamus or the crocodile.

**Animal-Worship.** — As strange to us as to the Greeks seems the animal-worship of the ancient Egyptians. Clemens, after describing the superb temples of Egypt, the solemn ceremonies, and the magnificent processions of the priests, thus contrasts all this with the deity which is the object of this adoration: "But if you enter the penetralia, and inquire for the image of the god, one of the attendants approaches with a solemn and mysterious aspect, and, putting aside the veil, suffers you to peep in and obtain a glimpse of the divinity. There you behold a snake, a crocodile, or a cat, or some other beast, a fitter inhabitant of a cavern or a bog than a temple."

To kill one of these sacred animals was adjudged the greatest impiety. Persons so unfortunate as to kill one through accident were sometimes murdered by the infuriated people. A Roman soldier, having killed a sacred cat, was set upon by the multitude and killed, in spite of the intercession of the reigning Ptolemy. The destruction of a cat in a burning building was lamented more than the loss of the property. Upon the death of a dog, every member of the family shaved his head. The scarabæus, or beetle, was especially sacred, being considered an emblem of the sun.

titude, and of all whose minds were not entirely uncontaminated by Egyptian habits, to the crude superstitions from which it was his object to free them." — WILKINSON, *Ancient Egyptians*, Vol. I. p. 331.

**The Sacred Bull Apis.** — Not only were various animals held sacred as being the emblems of certain deities, but some were thought to be real gods. This belief of the Egyptians that their gods actually incarnated themselves in various animals is best illustrated in their worship of the bull Apis. The soul of Osiris, it was imagined, animated the body of some bull, which might be known from certain spots and markings. One of these marks was a vulture with outspread wings upon the back of the ox. At Memphis was the sacred stable in which was kept “the fair and beautiful image of the soul of Osiris.”

Upon the death of the Apis, a great search, accompanied with loud lamentation, was made throughout the land for his successor : for, the moment the soul of Osiris departed from the dying bull, it entered a calf that moment born. The calf was always found with the proper markings ; but, as Wilkinson says, the young animal had probably been put to “much inconvenience and pain to make the marks and hair conform to his description.”

The body of the deceased Apis — if he lived beyond twenty-five years he was killed and cast into a well, without ceremony — was carefully embalmed, and, amid funeral ceremonies of great expense and magnificence, deposited in the tomb of his predecessors. In 1851, Mariette discovered this sepulchral chamber of the sacred bulls. It is a narrow gallery, two thousand feet in length, cut in the limestone cliffs just opposite the site of ancient Memphis. Thirty of the immense granite sarcophagi, fifteen feet long and eight wide and high, have been brought to light.

**Explanation of Animal-Worship.** — Many explanations have been given to account for the existence of so low and debased a form of worship among a people so far advanced in the scale of culture as were the ancient Egyptians, and who, moreover, entertained such just and exalted conceptions of Deity. Plutarch believed that the worship arose from the custom of using for military standards the figures of various animals, which gradually came to be regarded as sacred. Diodorus accounted for it by the fable that the gods, when hard pressed in their battle with the giants,



sought safety in the disguise of animals, which hence became objects of adoration.

Some modern scholars propose the following solution: The ancient religion of the Egyptians was the result of the meeting and partial blending and accommodation to each other of two very different systems of belief. Hence its dualistic character. The element which manifested itself in animal-worship had its origin and basis in that low form of religion existing at the present day among many African tribes, and known as fetichism, or the adoration of material objects, animate or inanimate. The purer monotheistic element, represented by the sacerdotal order, was introduced by the Hamites, or perhaps Semites, who mingled with the original dwellers in the Nile valley. We know that the doctrines taught the initiated in the priestly colleges prevailed from the very remotest times among the ancestors of at least the latter of these Asiatic intruders. This sacerdotal class, finding their doctrines too refined and spiritual for the masses, allowed them to retain their own sensuous worship, but dignified it with temples and magnificent ceremonies. In course of time attempts to harmonize the two forms of belief led to a complicated and ingenious system of symbolism, till every sacred animal and object in the lower mode of worship became an emblem of some attribute of the Deity. As all nature is a parable, an emblem,—the things which are seen being a figure of those things which are not seen,—it was not an entirely fanciful system that was evolved by this endeavor.

Probably the only modification we need make in this theory to bring it into accord with the actual facts, is to suppose the more spiritual truths, instead of being brought into Egypt from without, to have been the natural outgrowth of Egyptian thought and experience. Then the sacred animals in the later worship would represent an earlier stage of the Egyptian religion, just as many superstitious beliefs and observances in modern religions are simply survivals from the prehistoric ages of these faiths and creeds.



**Judgment of the Dead.** — Death was a great equalizer among the Egyptians. King and peasant alike must stand before the judgment-seat of Osiris and his forty-two assessors.

This judgment of the soul in the other world was prefigured by a peculiar ordeal to which the body was subjected here. Between each chief city and the burial-place on the western edge of the valley was a sacred lake, across which the body was borne in a barge. But, before admittance to the boat, it must pass the ordeal called "the judgment of the dead." This was a trial before a tribunal of forty-two judges, assembled upon the shore of the lake. Any person could bring accusations against the deceased, false charges being guarded against by the most dreadful penalties. If no proofs of impiety were established, the body was allowed to be borne across the sacred waters to the place of sepulture. But if it appeared that the life of the deceased had been evil, passage to the boat of Charon, as the master of the barge was called, was denied; and the body was either carried home in dishonor, or, in case of the poor who could not afford to care for the mummy, was interred on the shores of the lake. Many mummies of those refused admission to the tombs of their fathers have been dug up along these "Stygian banks." Diodorus affirms that several Pharaohs were denied the usual funeral honors. The soul of the body thus adjudged unworthy of sepulture was condemned to wander for a hundred years in the realms of the dead.

But this ordeal of the body was only a faint symbol of the dread tribunal of Osiris before which the soul must appear in the lower world. In one scale of a balance, held by Horus and Anubis, was placed the heart of the deceased; in the other scale, an image of Justice, or Truth. The soul stands by watching the result, and, as the beam inclines, is either welcomed to the companionship of the good Osiris, or consigned to oblivion in the jaws of a frightful hippopotamus-headed monster, "the devourer of evil souls." This annihilation, however, is only the fate of those inveterately wicked. Those respecting whom hopes of reformation may be entertained are condemned to return to earth and do pen-

ance in long cycles of lives in the bodies of various animals. This is what is known as the transmigration of souls. The kind of animals the soul should animate, and the length of its transmigrations, were determined by the nature of its sins.



JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD.

These ceremonies at the sacred lake, and before the tribunal of Osiris and his assessors, are of great interest as showing the influence of the Egyptian religion upon the nations of Southern Europe; for they are doubtless the original of the Acherusian lake, Charon and the Styx, and a whole series of Grecian and Roman fables and beliefs respecting the other world, and the fortunes of the soul after death.

**Tombs.** — “All Egypt bore the impress of religion.” Before all things else, the tombs of the ancient Egyptians tell us of their faith and worship. They believed that, after having spent three thousand years with Osiris, the good soul would return to earth, and reanimate its former body. Hence little care was bestowed upon the temporary residences of the living, but the “eternal homes” of the dead were fitted up with the most lavish expenditure of labor. These were chambers, sometimes built of brick or stone, but more usually cut in the limestone cliffs that form the western rim of the Nile valley; for that, as the land of the sunset, was conceived to be the realm of darkness and of death. The

cliffs opposite the ancient Egyptian capitals are honeycombed with sepulchral cells.

In the hills back of Thebes is the so-called Valley of the Tombs of the Kings, the "Westminster Abbey of Egypt." Here are twenty-five magnificent sepulchres. These consist of extensive rock-cut passages and chambers, whose walls are covered with sculptures and paintings depicting the rewards and punishments awaiting men in the after-life, according to their deserts.

The ordinary tombs were owned by the priests, and were bought and sold like any other form of property. They were fitted up in various styles to suit different purchasers; even the paintings and legends were all finished, leaving nothing to be done save the insertion of the name of the deceased. Many of the wealthy class purchased sites from the priests, and then spent immense sums in embellishing family tombs, some of which are said to have rivalled those of the kings themselves.

The poorer classes, who were unable to defray the expense of a separate tomb, were, after the embalming of the body in the rudest and most inexpensive manner, laid in tiers in great trenches dug in the desert sands.

The sculptures and paintings of the tombs usually portray the occupation of the deceased, being representations of the various processes in different manufactures, scenes of social festivities, and domestic employments. Thus the artist has converted for us the Egyptian necropolis into a city of the living, where the Egypt of four thousand years ago seems to pass before our eyes.

**The Pyramids.** — Remains of ancient pyramidal structures, the simple and durable character of which form of edifice led to its adoption by primitive builders, are found in all parts of the world, — in Mexico, China, India, Chaldæa, and Egypt. But the enormous structures of this nature raised by the dwellers of the Nile valley far surpass all other edifices of the same kind, and are the most wonderful and venerable monuments that have been preserved to us from the early world.

The Egyptian pyramids were almost all erected before the

Twelfth Dynasty ; and the largest and most perfect, as we have already learned, were raised by the monarchs of the Fourth Dynasty. This fact lends to them the greatest interest ; for although thus standing away back in the earliest twilight of the historic morning, they mark, not the beginning, but the perfection, of Egyptian art. They speak of long periods of growth in art and science lying beyond the era they represent. It is this vast and mysterious background that astonishes us even more than these giant forms cast up against it.

The principal Egyptian pyramids, sixty-seven in number, are found in groups along the edge of the Libyan desert, for a distance of about sixty miles above the present city of Cairo. Being sepulchral monuments, they are confined to the western side of the Nile valley ; for that, as we have already seen, was considered the region of darkness and death.

The largest of the Gizeh group, the Pyramid of Cheops, rises from a base covering thirteen acres, to a height of four hundred and eighty feet. According to Herodotus, Cheops employed one hundred thousand men for twenty years in its erection, ten years' preparatory work having been expended upon the great causeway over which the stones were dragged from the Nile.

All the pyramids were constructed of stone, save three or four, which were built of sun-dried brick. These latter have crumbled into vast conical heaps, like the mounds left by the pyramid-temples of the Babylonians.

Several of the pyramids have been opened, and sarcophagi discovered in their inner chambers, thus proving their sepulchral character. Ambition, doubtless, as well as a desire to secure the royal body against any possible accident or violence, determined their enormous size. After the body had been placed within, the passage-way was closed by letting fall a portcullis of hard granite ;<sup>1</sup> and all traces of the entrance were then obliterated by masonry.

<sup>1</sup> This so effectually blocks the way that modern explorers of the pyramids, in seeking an entrance, are often forced to cut a tunnel around the obstruction, through the softer limestone.

**Palaces and Temples.** — The early Memphian kings built great unadorned pyramids, but the later Theban monarchs constructed splendid palaces and temples. “Thebes,” says Lenormant, “in spite of all the ravages of time and of the barbarian, still presents the grandest, the most prodigious assemblage of buildings ever erected by the hand of man.”

The ruins that cover the site of this ancient capital are the remains of palaces and temples erected by the combined labors of many of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies from as early as the Twelfth Dynasty to the Roman conquest. “Most of the great temples, like our cathedrals, were the work of age after age.” Two of the most prominent masses of buildings are called, the one the Palace of Karnak, and the other the Temple of Luxor, from the names of two native villages built near or within the ruined enclosures. The former was the work of seven kings, and was more than five hundred years in process of building.

Any detailed description of these ruins is here impossible. We can only notice that the walls of both palace and temple, as well as the faces of the forest of columns and obelisks that adorned the numerous courts and corridors, are covered with sculptures and paintings, portraying the processions of the priests or the exploits of the kings.

In connection with the temple proper were various buildings for the use of the priests of the sacred college, which corresponded to the chapter of the modern cathedral. As an adjunct of the temple at Karnak was a Hall of Columns, which consisted of a phalanx of one hundred and sixty-four gigantic pillars. Some of these columns measure seventy feet in height, with capitals sixty-five feet in circumference.

Although the ruins of the royal and sacred edifices at Thebes surpass all others in the Nile valley, still there are many remains of a similar nature, though less remarkable in extent, found upon the different sites occupied by the other capitals and chief cities of Egypt. Most of these, however, are of a later date than those of Karnak and Luxor. In Nubia, beyond the First Cataract, is the





THE GREAT HALL OF COLUMNS AT KARNAK

renowned rock-hewn temple of Ipsambul, the façade of which is adorned with four gigantic portrait-statues of Rameses II., seventy feet in height. This temple has been pronounced the greatest and grandest achievement of Egyptian art.

**Sculpture: Sphinxes and Colossi.** — Egyptian sculpture grew out of painting or hieroglyphical writing. The figure or character, at first a mere outline drawing, was after a time cut into the rock surface, and next the rock was chiselled away so as to leave the figure in bas-relief. Egyptian mimetic art barely reached the point so early attained by the Greeks, who cut the figure clear



FAÇADE OF ROCK TEMPLE AT IPSAMBUL.

around, and forced it to stand out boldly, away from all support. A strange immobility, at an early period, attached itself to Egyptian art, due to the influence of religion.<sup>1</sup> The artist, in the portrayal of the figures of the gods, was not allowed to change a

<sup>1</sup> At first, great freedom, originality, and promise characterized Egyptian art, which is generally regarded as having reached its highest perfection in the monuments of the Pyramid-builders.



single line in the sacred form. Hence the impossibility of improvement in sacred sculpture. Wilkinson says that Menes would have recognized the statue of Osiris in the Temple of Amasis. Plato complained that the pictures and statues in the temples in his day were no better than those made "ten thousand years" before.

The heroic, or colossal, size of many of the Egyptian statues excites our admiration. The two colossi of Amunoph III. at



COLOSSI AT THEBES.

Thebes are forty-seven feet high, and are hewn each from a single block of granite. The appearance of these gigantic figures, upon the solitary plain, is peculiarly impressive. "There they sit together, yet apart, in the midst of the plain, serene and vigilant, still keeping their untired watch over the lapse of ages and the eclipse of Egypt."

One of these colossi acquired a wide reputation among the Greeks and Romans, under the name of the "Vocal Memnon." When the rays of the rising sun fell upon the colossus, it emitted low musical tones, which the Egyptians believed to be the greeting of the statue to the mother-sun. These mysterious sounds, it has been affirmed, were produced by a person concealed by the priests in the lap of the colossus. It is more probable that the musical notes were produced by the action of the sun upon the surface of the rock while wet with dew.<sup>1</sup> "It had not been produced in the colossus before the earthquake that, about the time of Tiberius [Roman Emperor, A.D. 14-37], threw down the upper part of the statue, and thus uncovered the fissures most exposed to the action of the dew; it ceased when the statue was repaired by Septimius Severus [Roman Emperor, A.D. 193-211], and put into the state in which we now see it."

The sphinxes, figures having commonly the head of a man and the body of a lion, symbolizing power and intelligence, were often ranked along the avenues leading to the palaces and temples. The most famous of the sphinxes of Egypt is the colossal figure at the base of the Great Pyramid, at Gizeh, sculptured, some think, by Menes, and others, by one of the kings of the Fourth Dynasty. This immense statue, cut out of the native rock, save the fore-legs, which are built of masonry, is ninety feet long and seventy feet high. "It is certainly the most gigantic, and perhaps the oldest, idol of the human race." Excavations in the sand heaped about it have revealed the ruin of a temple, or chapel, between its outstretched paws. "This huge, mutilated figure has an astonishing effect; it seems like an eternal spectre. The stone phantom seems attentive; one would say that it hears and sees.

<sup>1</sup> Musical rocks are found in different parts of the world. The phenomenon is connected with granite rocks along the course of the Middle Orinoco, in South America. The granite is split with deep crevices, that seem to give emission to these mysterious sounds. Humboldt explained the phenomenon by supposing currents of air, produced by the heating of the rocks, to beat against the spangles of mica that line the crevices.

Its great ear appears to collect the sounds of the past ; its eyes, directed to the east, gaze, as it were, into the future ; its aspect has a depth, a truth of expression, irresistibly fascinating to the spectator. In this figure — half statue, half mountain — we see a wonderful majesty, a grand serenity, and even a sort of sweetness of expression.”<sup>1</sup>

**Glass Manufacture.** — The manufacture of glass, a discovery usually attributed to the Phœnicians, was carried on in Egypt more than four thousand years ago. The paintings at Beni-Hassan represent glass-blowers moulding all manner of articles. Glass bottles, and various other objects of the same material, are found in great numbers in the tombs. Some of these objects show that the ancient Egyptians were acquainted with processes of coloring glass that secured results which we have not yet been able to equal. They imitated, with marvellous success, the variegated hues of insects and stones. The manufacture of precious gems, so like the natural stone as to defy detection, was a lucrative profession. The sacred scarabæi (beetles) were reproduced in glass, with linings so delicate that it is almost certain that magnifying-glasses were used in their manufacture. Glass coffins were sometimes used. Processes for cutting and grinding glass — patented quite recently among us as a new discovery — were well known to the Egyptian artists.

The various articles of glass manufacture, as well as objects of the lapidary's art, which were produced by the Egyptians, were sought after and highly prized by all the nations of antiquity. They are found in the tombs of Etruria and Greece and Asia Minor, and are dug from the palace-mounds of Assyria and Babylonia. The Phœnicians, being carriers of all this vast trade, often received credit, among the peoples to whom they introduced these articles, for various inventions and discoveries of which they were simply the disseminators. ✓

<sup>1</sup> Ampère, as quoted by Lenormant, *Ancient History of the East*, Vol. I. p. 331.

**The Papyrus Paper.**—The chief writing material used by the ancient Egyptians was the noted papyrus paper, manufactured from a reed which grew in the marshes and along the water-channels of the Nile. From the names of this Egyptian plant, *byblos* and *papyrus*, come our words “Bible” and “paper.” The plant has now entirely disappeared from Egypt, and is found only on the Anapus, in the island of Sicily, and on a small stream near Jaffa, in Palestine. Long before the plant became extinct in Egypt an ancient prophecy had declared, “The paper reeds by the brooks . . . shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.”<sup>1</sup> The costly nature of the papyrus paper led to the use of many substitutes for writing purposes—as leather, broken pottery, tiles, stones, and wooden tablets.

**Forms of Writing.**—The Egyptians employed three forms of writing: the *hieroglyphical*, consisting of rude pictures of material objects, usually employed in monumental inscriptions;<sup>2</sup> the *hieratic*, an abbreviated or rather simplified form of the hieroglyphical, adapted to writing, and forming the greater part of the papyrus manuscripts; and the *demotic*, or *encorial*, a still simpler form than the hieratic. The last did not come into use till about the seventh century B.C., and was then used for all ordinary documents, both of a civil and commercial nature. It could be written eight or ten times as fast as the hieroglyphical form.

**Key to Egyptian Writing.**—The key to the Egyptian writing was discovered by means of the Rosetta Stone, for which the world is indebted to the *savants* that accompanied the expedition of Napoleon in 1798. This valuable relic, a heavy block of black basalt, is now in the British Museum. It holds a trilingual inscription, written in hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek characters. Champollion, a French scholar, by comparing the characters composing the words Ptolemy, Alexander, and other names in the

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xix. 7.

<sup>2</sup> “The hieroglyphical writing reveals itself to us in the monuments of the first dynasties with all that complication which belonged to it down to the last day of its existence.”—LENORMANT.

parallel inscriptions, discovered the value of several letters ; and thus were opened the vast libraries of Egyptian learning.

We have now the Ritual, or Book, of the Dead, which gives the soul minute directions how to meet every possible emergency and peril in its journey through the underworld ; novels, or romances, and fairy tales, among which is "Cinderella and the Glass Slipper," and a story written expressly for the amusement of the little son of Rameses II. ; autobiographies, public and private letters, fables, and epics ; treatises on medicine, astronomy, and various other scientific subjects ; and books on history — in prose and verse — which fully justify the declaration of the Egyptian priests to Solon : "You Greeks are mere children, talkative and vain ; you know nothing at all of the past."

Of all this literature, the novels perhaps possess the most peculiar interest. The Egyptian notion of the transmigration of the soul afforded the romancer an admirable opportunity to introduce into his story elements which to our mode of thinking are supernatural, but which to the old Egyptian readers doubtless seemed perfectly natural. Not only do the dead reappear, — the old dry mummies suddenly warming with life as the long-absent souls return to their former tenements, — but animals and trees are made to talk, and the imprisoned souls, doing penance probably for sins committed in their human life, converse familiarly with men. Nor does the premature death of the hero or heroine cause the novelist any embarrassment ; the tale runs right on as though nothing serious had happened.<sup>1</sup> And these romances afforded entertainment not alone to the living, for they were sometimes put in the tomb "to amuse the leisure of the dead."

**Astronomy.** — The cloudless and brilliant skies of Egypt must have early invited the inhabitants of the Nile valley, like the dwellers of the Chaldæan plains, to the study of the heavenly bodies. And another circumstance closely related to their very existence, the inundation of the Nile, following the changing cycles of the stars, could not but have incited them to the watch-

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. I. p. 151.

ing and predicting of astronomical movements. Their observations led them to discover the length, very nearly, of the sidereal year, which they made to consist of 365 days, every fourth year adding one day, making the number for that year 366. They also divided the year into twelve months of thirty days each, adding five days to complete the year. This was the calendar that Julius Cæsar introduced into the Roman Empire, and which, slightly reformed by Pope Gregory XIII. in 1582, has been the system employed by almost all the civilized world up to the present day.

The birth of astrology was natural, and its absurdities are mingled with all the more solid astronomical attainments of the Egyptians. They noticed that the rise of the Nile began just at the heliacal rising of the bright dog-star Sirius, and they naturally inferred that the river obeyed some subtle influence of that body. In the Red Sea they saw, too, the tides rising and falling under some strange impulse from the wandering sun and moon. It was an easy step from these observed influences of the heavenly bodies over the inanimate world, to a belief in their benign or baneful influence upon the vegetable world, and over human life and destiny.

**Geometry and Arithmetic.**—The Greeks accounted for the early rise of the science of geometry among the Egyptians by reference to the necessity they were under each year of re-establishing the old boundaries of their fields—the inundation obliterating old landmarks and divisions. Diodorus says, “The river, changing the appearance of the country very materially every year, causes various and many discussions among neighboring proprietors about the extent of their property; and it would be difficult for any person to decide upon their claims without geometrical proof.” The science thus forced upon their attention was cultivated with zeal and success. A single papyrus has been discovered that holds twelve geometrical theorems.

Arithmetic was necessarily brought into requisition in solving astronomical and geometrical problems. We ourselves are great



debtors to the ancient Egyptians for much of our mathematical knowledge, which has come to us from the banks of the Nile, through the Greeks and Saracens.

**Medicine and the Art of Embalming.**—The custom of embalming the dead, affording opportunities for the examination of the body, without doubt had a great influence upon the development of the sciences of anatomy and medicine among the Egyptians. That the embalmers were physicians, we know from various testimonies. Thus we are told in the Bible that Joseph “commanded the *physicians* to embalm his father.” The Egyptian doctors had a very great reputation among the ancients; several of the Persian kings attached to their courts medical advisers from the schools of Egypt.

Every doctor was a specialist, and was not allowed to take charge of cases outside of his own branch. As the artist was forbidden to change the lines of the sacred statues, so the physician was not permitted to treat cases save in the manner prescribed by the customs of the past; and if he were so presumptuous as to depart from the established mode of treatment, and the patient died, he was adjudged guilty of murder. Many drugs and medicines were used; the ciphers, or characters, employed by modern apothecaries to designate grains and drams are of Egyptian invention.

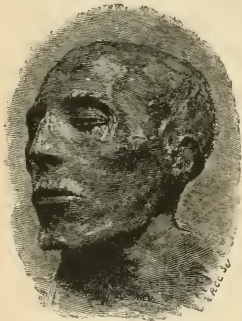
In the various processes of embalming, the physicians made use of oils, resins, bitumen, and various aromatic gums. The bodies of the wealthy were preserved by being filled with costly aromatic and resinous substances, and swathed in bandages of linen. The face was sometimes gilded, or covered with a gold mask. As this, which was the “most approved method” of embalming, was very costly, the expense being equivalent probably to \$1000 or more, the bodies of the poorer classes were simply “salted and dried,” and wrapped in coarse mats, preparatory to burial. It is estimated that “between 2000 B.C. and 700 A.D., when embalming ceased, 420,000,000 mummied corpses” were placed in the various Egyptian cemeteries.



**The Discovery and Identification of Royal Mummies.** — Only a few years ago (in 1881) the mummies of Thothmes III., Seti I., and Rameses II., together with those of about forty other “kings, queens, princes, and priests,” embracing nearly all the Pharaohs of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-first Dynasties, were found in a secret cave near Thebes.

It seems that, some time in the 12th century, some sudden alarm caused these bodies to be taken hastily from the royal tombs of which we have spoken (see p. 42), and secreted in this hidden chamber. When the danger had passed, the place of concealment had evidently been forgotten; so the bodies were never restored to their ancient tombs, but remained in this secret cavern to be discovered in our own day.

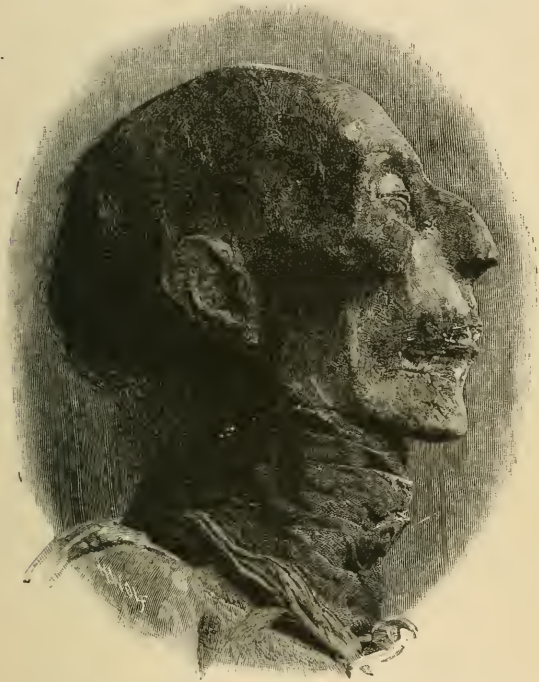
The mummies were taken to the Boulak Museum, at Cairo, where they were identified by means of the inscriptions upon the cases and wrappings. The bodies of Seti I., Rameses II., and of others were unbandaged (1886), so that now we may look upon the faces of the greatest and most renowned of the Pharaohs. The faces of both Seti and Rameses are so remarkably preserved, that “were their subjects to return to the earth to-day they could not fail to recognize their old sovereigns.” Both are strong faces, of Semitic cast, that of Rameses bearing a striking resemblance to that of his father Seti, and both closely resembling their portrait



SETI I. (From a photograph of the mummy.)

statues and profiles. Professor Maspero, the Director-General of the Excavations and Antiquities of Egypt, in his official report of the uncovering of the mummies, writes as follows of the appearance of the face of Rameses: “The face of the mummy gives a fair idea of the face of the living king. The expression is unintellectual, perhaps slightly animal; but even under the somewhat grotesque disguise of mummification, there is plainly to be seen an air of sovereign majesty, of resolve, and of pride.”

After these mighty Pharaohs, the most interesting of the mummies is that of Sekenen-Ra, the native prince who raised the standard of revolt against the Hyksos invaders. He fell in battle, pierced



PROFILE OF RAMESES II. (From a photograph of the mummy.<sup>1</sup>)

with many wounds, which, when the body was unwrapped, were plainly visible. He was the hero-martyr of the patriot movement

<sup>1</sup> For this cut and the preceding one of Seti I., we are indebted to the favor of The Century Company. On the subject of the finding and identification of the Pharaohs, consult two excellent articles in *The Century Magazine* for May, 1887.

which drove the Shepherd conquerors from the land, and set Amosis upon the throne of the ancient Pharaohs.

**Egypt's Influence upon History.** — The influence of the arts, sciences, learning, and institutions of the ancient Egyptians upon the Mediterranean nations is but just beginning to be realized. From the Nile came the germs of much found in the later culture of Asia and of Europe. In speaking of the influence of the political institutions of the Egyptians, Dr. Smith observes: "The Greeks regarded the laws of Egypt as the expression of the highest wisdom and the fountain of inspiration to their own legislators and philosophers — Lycurgus, Solon, Pythagoras, and Plato; and the likeness between the Egyptian and Jewish codes is a decisive testimony alike to the merit of the former and to the purpose for which Moses was led to acquire his Egyptian learning."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Smith's *Ancient History of the East*, p. 191.

"It has been said that 'the forty-two laws of the Egyptian religion contained in the 125th chapter of the Book of the Dead fall short in nothing of the teachings of Christianity,' and conjectured that Moses, in compiling his code of laws, did but 'translate into Hebrew the religious precepts which he found in the sacred books' of the people, among whom he had been brought up. Such expressions are, no doubt, exaggerated; but they convey what must be allowed to be a fact — viz., that there is a very close agreement between the moral law of the Egyptians and the precepts of the Decalogue." — RAWLINSON, *History of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. I. p. 104.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE CHALDÆAN MONARCHY.

(From about 4000 to 1300 B.C.)

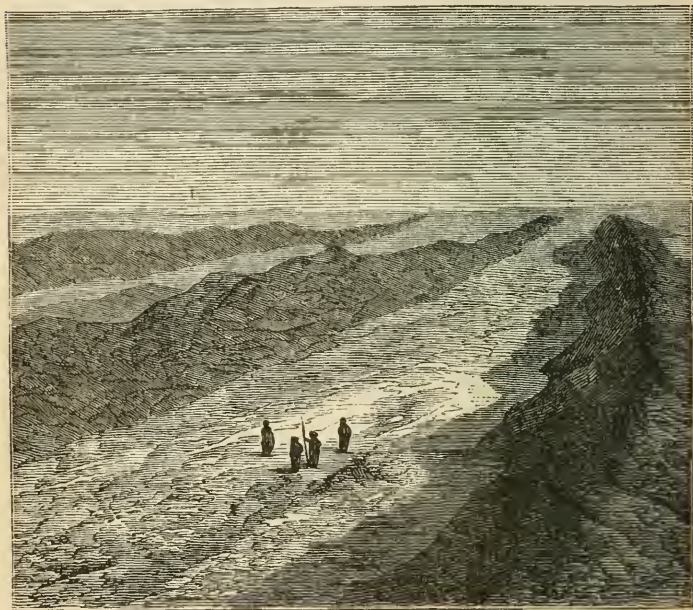
**Basin of the Tigris and Euphrates.** — As in the case of Egypt, so in that of the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, the physical features of the country exerted a great influence upon the history of its ancient peoples. Differences in geological structure divide this region into an upper and a lower district; and this division in natural features is reflected, as we shall see, throughout its political history. The northern part, which comprised ancient Assyria, forms undulating plains, so elevated above their streams that the waters of these can be rendered available only by laborious systems of irrigation.

But all the southern portion of this great river-basin, known as Chaldæa, or Babylonia, presents quite a different aspect. This lower district has been formed by the gradual encroachment of the deposits of the Tigris and Euphrates upon the waters of the Persian Gulf, and on this account has been called the "Asian Egypt." Owing to its origin, it is as level as the sea, and the soil is of inexhaustible fertility. The climate is almost rainless, and hence agriculture is dependent mainly upon artificial irrigation. The distribution of the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates was secured, in ancient times, by a stupendous system of canals and irrigants, which, at the present day, in a sand-choked and ruined condition, spread like a perfect network over the face of the country.

The productions of Babylonia are very like those of the Nile valley. The luxuriant growth of grain upon these alluvial flats excited the wonder of all the Greek travellers who visited the

East. Herodotus will not tell his countrymen the whole truth, for fear they will doubt his veracity. The soil is as fertile now as in the time of the historian ; but owing to the neglect of the ancient canals, the greater part of this once populous district has been converted into alternating areas of marsh and desert.

**The Three Great Monarchies.** — Within the Tigris-Euphrates basin, three great empires — the Chaldæan, the Assyrian, and the



ANCIENT BABYLONIAN CANALS.

Babylonian — successively rose to prominence and dominion. Each, in turn, not only extended its authority over the valley, but also made the power of its arms felt throughout the adjoining regions. We shall now trace the rise and the varied fortunes of these empires, and the slow growth of the arts and sciences from



rude beginnings among the early Chaldæans to their fuller and richer development under the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchies.

**The Accadians.**— In the earliest times Lower Chaldæa was known as Shumir, the Shinar of the Bible, while Upper Chaldæa bore the name of Accad. The original inhabitants of this low country are now known to have been of Turanian race, and are called Shumiro-Accadians, or simply Accadians. Many scholars now regard it as probable that these people settled in the valley as early at least as the beginning of the fourth millennium before our era. They seem to have come from the mountain district southwest of the Caspian. That they came originally from a non-tropical, mountainous, mineral-bearing country, is inferred from such facts as that their name Accadian means “highlander,” and that while they had names for metals, they had no word for palm. ✓

The Accadians are believed to have laid the basis of civilization in the Euphrates valley, so that with them the history of Asian culture begins. They brought with them into the valley the art of hieroglyphical writing, which later developed into the well-known cuneiform system. They also had quite an extensive literature, and had made considerable advance in the art of building.

**Semites mingle with the Accadians.**— The civilization of the Accadians was given, it would seem, a great impulse by the arrival of a Semitic people. These foreigners were nomadic in habits, and altogether much less cultured than the Accadians. Gradually, however, they adopted the arts and literature of the people among whom they had settled; yet they retained their own language, which in the course of time superseded the less perfect Turanian speech of the original inhabitants; consequently the mixed people, known later as Chaldæans,<sup>1</sup> that arose from the blending of the two races, spoke a language essentially the same as that used by their northern neighbors, the Semitic Assyrians.

<sup>1</sup> This name does not appear in the inscriptions before the 9th century B.C.

**Sargon (Sharrukin) I.** (3800? B.C.). — Although we know something about the arts and culture of the early Accadians, still we know scarcely anything about their kings or their political affairs until after the arrival of the Semites. Then, powerful kings, sometimes of Semitic and then again of Turanian, or Accadian, origin, appear ruling in the cities of Accad and Shumir, and the political history of Chaldæa begins.

The first prominent monarch is called Sargon I. (Sharrukin), a Semitic king of Agadê, the chief city at this time of the upper country. An inscription recently deciphered makes this king to have reigned as early as 3800 B.C.<sup>1</sup>

Sargon was the Chaldæan Moses.<sup>2</sup> He appears to have been the first great organizer of the peoples of the Chaldæan plains. He apparently was unable to bring all the cities of Accad and Shumir under his sway, still he built up a powerful state, and extended his dominions to the Mediterranean, thus bringing the civilization of the Euphrates into significant contact with that rising in the West.

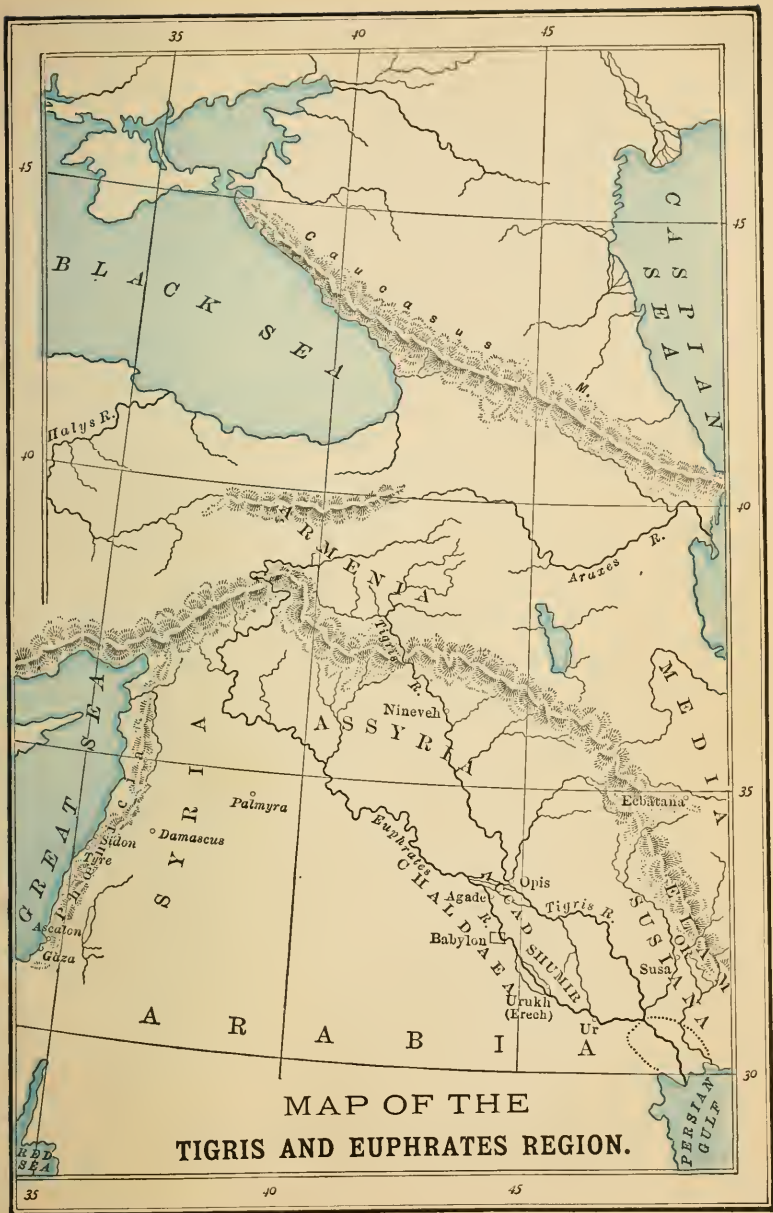
Yet not as a warrior, but as a patron and protector of letters, is Sargon's name destined to a sure place in history. He classified and translated the religious, mythological, and astronomical literature of the Accadians, and deposited the books in great libraries, which he established or enlarged, — the oldest and most valuable libraries of the ancient world. His relations to the learning of his times leads the scholar Sayce to call him the Chaldæan Solomon.

**Ur-êa (Uruk)** (2800? B.C.). — Descending ten centuries, we

<sup>1</sup> The inscription from which the date is derived is upon a cylinder of the last Babylonian king, Nabonadius, who reigned 555–538 B.C. He says that in restoring a temple at Sippara, he found a cylinder which had been deposited 3200 years before his day by Naram-Sin, the son of Sargon.

<sup>2</sup> An inscription says: "My mother . . . placed me in an ark of bulrushes; with bitumen my door she closed up; she threw me into the river, which did not enter into the ark to me. The river carried me; to the dwelling of Akki the water-carrier it brought me. Akki the water-carrier, in his goodness of heart, lifted me up from the river. Akki the water-carrier brought me up as his own son." — *Records of the Past*, Vol. V. p. 3.





MAP OF THE  
TIGRIS AND EUPHRATES REGION.



find another great king, now of the Accadian race, named Ur-êa (formerly read Uruk), reigning in Chaldæa. His capital city was Ur, in the southern land of Shumir.

This king appears, even to a greater extent than did Sargon, to have consolidated the petty states of Babylonia into one kingdom, and to have ruled over the cities of both Shumir and Accad. He is best known to us through the remains of his great buildings. He was, with perhaps one or two exceptions,<sup>1</sup> the first great builder among the kings of early Chaldæa. The art of building in his day had made considerable advance, and many of his edifices were quite richly adorned.

All the great structures of this king were tower-temples, built in several stages, and somewhat resembling the pyramids of Egypt. The sites of these edifices are marked at the present day by vast conical hills of crumbled ruins, that dot thickly the Chaldæan plains. From the vast number and size of his works — for Uruk adorned each of the chief cities of his empire with a great temple — we may infer either that as a despot he had at his command the life and labor of his subjects, whom he oppressed as the pyramid-building kings of Egypt burdened their people, or that as a conqueror he set to the task the captives of his numerous wars.

**Conquest of Chaldæa by the Elamites** (2286 B.C.). — While the Chaldæan kings were building their great cities and pyramid-temples on the plains of Lower Babylonia, the princes of the Elamites, a people of Turanian race, were setting up a rival kingdom to the northeast, just at the foot of the hills of Persia. The capital of this Scythian empire was Susa, thought to be one of the oldest, if not the very oldest, of Asiatic cities.

In the year 2286 B.C., a king of Elam, Kudur-Nakhunta by name, overran Chaldæa, took all the cities founded by Sargon and his successors, and from the temples of Uruk bore off in triumph to his capital, Susa, the statues of the Chaldæan gods, and set up in these lowland regions what is known as the Elamite Dynasty.

<sup>1</sup> Gudêa, the priest-king of Sirbula, appears to have erected many buildings; but his date is not settled, some placing him before, and others after, Ur-êa.

More than sixteen hundred years after this despoiling of the Chaldæan sanctuaries, a king of Nineveh (Asshur-bani-pal) captured the city of Susa, and found there these stolen statues and caused them to be restored to their original temples (see p. 82).

**Chedorlaomer, the Conqueror.** — Kudur-Nakhunta was succeeded by his son Kudur-Lagamer, the Chedorlaomer of Genesis, whose contact with the history of the Jewish patriarch Abraham has caused his name to be handed down to our own times in the records of the Hebrew people.

Chedorlaomer conceived the ambitious project of uniting all the nations and tribes of Western Asia, between the hills of Persia and the Mediterranean, in one gigantic kingdom. He was at least partly successful in his plans; for we know that the princes of Elam and Babylonia, and some of the kings of Syria, paid tribute to him.

Rawlinson, in reviewing the character of Chedorlaomer, says: "In thus effecting conquests which were not again made from the same quarter till the time of Nebuchadnezzar, fifteen or sixteen hundred years afterwards, Chedorlaomer has a good claim to be regarded as one of the most remarkable personages in the world's history, — being, as he is, the forerunner and prototype of all great Oriental conquerors who from time to time have built up vast empires in Asia out of heterogeneous material, which have, in a longer or shorter space, successively crumbled to decay."

**Chaldæa eclipsed by Assyria.** — After the Elamite princes had maintained a more or less perfect dominion over the cities of Chaldæa for two or three centuries, their power seems to have declined; and then for several centuries longer, down to about 1300 B.C., dynasties and kings of which we know very little as yet, ruled the country.

During this period, Babylon, gradually rising into prominence, overshadowed the more ancient Accadian cities, and became the leading city of the land. From it the whole country was destined, later, to draw the name by which it is best known — Babylonia.

Meanwhile a Semitic power had been slowly developing in the

north. This was the Assyrian empire, the later heart and centre of which was the great city of Nineveh. For a long time Assyria was simply a province or dependency of the lower kingdom ; but about 1300 B.C., the Assyrian monarch Tiglathi-nin (= Tiglath-Adar) conquered Babylonia, and Assyria assumed the place that had been so long held by Chaldæa. From this time on to the fall of Nineveh in 606 B.C., the monarchs of this country virtually controlled the affairs of Western Asia.

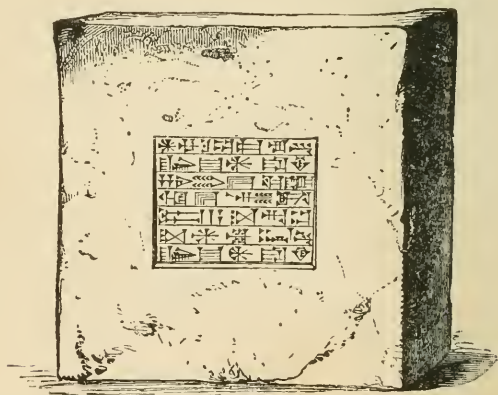
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## CHAPTER IV.

## ARTS AND GENERAL CULTURE OF THE CHALDÆANS.

**Tower-Temples.**—In the art of building, the Chaldæans, though their edifices fall far short of attaining the perfection exhibited by the earliest Egyptian structures, displayed no inconsiderable architectural knowledge and skill.

The most important of their constructions, and those alone of which any certain traces have survived to our own day, if we except their burial mounds, were their tower-temples. These



BABYLONIAN BRICK.

were simple in plan, consisting of two or three terraces, or stages, placed one upon another so as to form a sort of rude pyramid. The material used in their construction was sun-dried brick, the hills of Arabia and Persia being too distant to encourage the use of stone in any considerable quantity. The structure was some-

times protected by outer courses of burnt brick. Surmounting the upper platform was the temple proper, reached by stairs running up the sides of the stages. From the enamelled bricks, flakes of alabaster and marble, and occasional plates of gold found in the rubbish on the top of the mounds, we may infer the beauty and richness of the shrine.

All these tower-temples have crumbled into vast mounds, with only here and there a projecting mass of masonry to distinguish them from natural hills, for which they were at first mistaken. It is probable that they were used as astronomical observatories, and that from their summits the Chaldæan astrologers watched the changing aspect of the stars.

**Burial Mounds.**—The coffins of the Chaldæans have been pronounced the most curious sepulchral monuments of antiquity. (Rawlinson.) One kind consisted of a large terra-cotta cover, which was turned over the body, placed on a mat. Another kind was made of two large jars, placed mouth to mouth, the joint being closed by bitumen. These curious coffins were deposited in tiers, in artificial mounds, often of vast extent. In the burial mounds about the city of Wurka, the coffins are piled fifty deep. All about these mounds, the ground for miles on every side is filled with graves. It has been estimated that a greater number of bodies rest here than in the necropolis of Thebes. (Loftus.) So exalted was the sanctity that had attached to the ancient city of Wurka, that for more than two thousand years the spot was a sacred burial-place, not only for the Chaldæans, but also, it is conjectured, for the Assyrians and Babylonians, as no tombs have ever been found in Assyria or Upper Babylonia.

All the oldest cities in Chaldæa are thus surrounded by vast cemeteries. Bodies were transported long distances by the Tigris and the Euphrates, that they might repose at last in sacred ground. A similar sentiment still impels the Mohammedans in the same land to carry the bodies of friends vast distances, in order to lay them near the shrine of some celebrated saint.

**Cuneiform Writing.**—We have already mentioned the fact



that the Accadians, when they entered the Euphrates valley, were in possession of a system of writing. This was a simple pictorial, or hieroglyphical, system, which they gradually developed into the cuneiform. We can trace the same stages here in the development of the art of writing as are observed in its growth among the Egyptians.

We may distinguish five forms; the *hieroglyphic*, the *hieratic*, the *archaic cuneiform*, the *modern cuneiform*, and the *cursive*. The first and second are the same as the corresponding forms in Egyptian writing, and the one grew out of the other in the same way.

The archaic cuneiform is the same as the hieratic, only the characters, instead of being formed of unbroken lines, are composed of wedge-like marks; hence the name (from *cuneus*, a wedge). This form arose when the Accadians, having entered the low country, substituted tablets of clay for the papyrus or other similar material which they had formerly used. (Sayce.) The characters were impressed upon the soft tablet by means of a triangular stylus, which gave them their peculiar wedge-shaped form.

The modern cuneiform is simply an abbreviated form of the preceding; and the cursive is a still further simplification of the last. The modern cuneiform and cursive were not developed by the Chaldæans, but by the Assyrians, who borrowed their system of writing, as well as many other elements of their culture, from the people they had conquered.

The characters employed in all these modes of writing were of two kinds — ideographic and phonetic. The former were symbols representing entire words or ideas; the latter, several hundred in number, represented each a syllable, and thus constituted a syllabarium rather than a true alphabet. In its earliest stages the archaic cuneiform writing was made up largely of ideographs; but it gradually became more and more phonetic, until the syllabic characters formed the larger part of the inscription.

Although the Chaldæans, and the Assyrians after them, advanced so far in the difficult art of depicting thought, still they failed to

take the last step — to analyze the syllable into its simplest elements or sounds, and then represent each of these by a single character. The honor of this achievement was left to another people and race. It was not until more than two thousand years after the first improvements had been made in rude picture-writing by the Chaldæans, that the Persians,<sup>1</sup> beyond the Zagros ranges, to the east of the lowlands, finally took the step which marks the crowning achievement in the development of the greatest of human arts. That people reduced language to its ultimate elements, and with thirty-six characters represented all its elementary sounds. They thus replaced the cumbrous syllabic with the pliant alphabetical system. Thus the Turanian Accadians, the Semitic Assyrians, and the Aryan Persians — all contributed to the grand result. So, slowly and painfully, are wrought out the elements of human arts and culture.

The cuneiform mode of writing was in use about two thousand years, being employed by the nations in and near the Euphrates basin — that is, by the Chaldæans, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Susianians, the Armenians, the Medes, and the Persians — down to the time of the conquest of the East by the Macedonians (about 330 B.C.).

**Books and Libraries.** — The books of the Chaldæans were composed of clay tablets, varying in length from one inch to twelve inches, and being about one inch thick. They were closely written on both sides, and often over the edges, the characters employed being the cuneiform, already described. Those holding records of special importance were, after having been once written over and baked, covered with a thin coating of clay, and then the matter was written in duplicate and the tablets again baked. If the outer writing were defaced by accident or altered by design,

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the honor of the reduction of the hieroglyphical cuneiform writing to a purely alphabetical mode of representation should be given to the Medes rather than to the Persians. In any event, it must be allowed that the Persians, even though they be denied the honor of original inventors, improved and perfected the system.

the removal of the outer coating would at once show the true text.

The tablets were carefully preserved in great public libraries. Even during the Turanian period, before the Semites had entered the land, one or more of these collections existed in each of the chief cities of Accad and Shumir. "Accad," says Sayce, "was the China of Asia. Almost every one could read and write." Erech (Uruk) was especially renowned for its great library, and was known as "the City of Books."



CHALDÆAN TABLETS. (After Layard.)

#### How the Contents of the Accadian Libraries were preserved.

— All the books in the earliest Accadian libraries were written, of course, in the old Turanian language used by the Accadians, and had these tablets not been translated into another tongue before that Accadian speech became a dead language (it became extinct, according to Sayce, about 1700 B.C.), it is very doubtful whether we should ever have known anything about their contents. But fortunately the Semitic princes that came to rule in the Accadian

cities were, some of them at least, as we have seen in the case of Sargon I., patrons of literature, and to them it is that we are indebted for the preservation of what is perhaps the oldest literature of the world.

We have noticed how Sargon I., king of Agadê, devoted himself to the work of collecting and systematizing the literature of the Accadians. Now, even in his day, the Accadian language was already being superseded by the Semitic, and he consequently had all the Accadian books of most importance turned into Semitic, or Assyrian. In doing this he was careful to have his scribes copy the old text also, so that the new tablets were exact reproductions of the old, with an interlinear translation. Sometimes, however, the two texts were written in parallel columns. Sargon further ordered the compilation of grammars and lexicons of the Accadian language, as additional aids in its study.

Long after Sargon's time, when Assyria had risen into power and eclipsed Babylonia, one of the kings of that country (see p. 93) had copies made of these bilingual tablets, and deposited these copies in the royal library of Nineveh. These it is that we now possess. In this way was a good part of the contents of the first libraries of the race preserved to become the inestimable treasure of the present generation.

To the purely Accadian literature derived from the old libraries of Accad and Shumir, there was added during the Semitic period a great mass of fresh literature, — legends, heroic myths, and sacred hymns, which grew up after the Semites and Turanians had blended, or while they were blending, into one people. Quite a different spirit from that which characterizes the earlier pervades this later literature, especially the religious portion of it, of which we shall say something in a moment.

Embracing in one view the earlier and later Chaldæan tablets, we find them to cover the greatest possible variety of subjects. There are mythological tablets, which hold the myths of the Chaldæans respecting their gods; religious tablets, filled with prayers and hymns; legal tablets, containing laws, law-cases, contracts,

wills, loans, and various other matters of a commercial nature ; legendary and epic tablets ; and astronomical, geographical, historical, and mathematical tablets, illustrating the wisdom of the Chaldæans in all these matters.

We will say just a word of what the tablets reveal respecting the religion and mythology of the Chaldæans, and of the state of science among them.

**The Religion.** — The tablets hold a large religious literature. Those belonging to the earliest Accadian period open up to us what is perhaps the first and most instructive chapter in the religious history of the race.

The Accadian religion, for religion it must be called, although it was of a very low type, was essentially the same as that held to-day by the nomadic Turanian tribes of Northern Asia — what is known as Shamanism. It consisted in a belief in good and evil spirits, of which the latter held by far the most prominent place. To avert the malign influence of these wicked spirits, the Accadians had resort to charms and magic rites.<sup>1</sup>

But even before the arrival of the Semites, the Accadian religion had advanced from the Shamanistic stage into the polytheistic. Not only had the good spirits come to hold a more prominent place in the religious system, but some of them had been lifted to positions of pre-eminence among the others, and had become real deities. The tablets are now filled, not alone with incantations, but with prayers and with hymns of praise to the gods.

By the time the Accadians had reached this stage in their religious progress, the Semites had come into the land. Their religion was a form of Sabæanism, — that is, a worship of the heavenly bodies, — in which the sun was naturally the central object of adoration. The two systems now blended to form one of the most influential religions of the world — one which spread far and wide under the form of Baal worship. The Chaldæan pantheon was now formed, chiefly by the early Semitic kings of Accad

<sup>1</sup> Consult *Records of the Past*, I. 135; and III. 142.



and Shumir. "The same kings that organized men below," says Sayce, "organized the gods above."

The order of the chief gods in the perfected system was as follows: At the head of the Pantheon was Il, or Ra, the latter name being one of the titles of the Egyptian Osiris, and the former being the root of the Hebrew Elohim and of the Arabian Allah.<sup>1</sup> Below Il was a triad — Ana, Belus, and Hoa, gods of the earth, of the heaven, and of the waters, and corresponding, Rawlinson ventures to think, to the classical Pluto, Jupiter, and Neptune. Next to these divinities was a second triad — Sin (Moon), San, or Shamas (Sun), and Bin, or Vul (Atmosphere). Then come five planetary deities, representing Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, embracing all the planets visible to the naked eye. Besides these divinities, which constituted the twelve primary gods, there were numerous secondary and local deities and genii, for room was made in the new system for all the spirits of the Turanian system, as well as for the deities of the Semitic worship.

The Semites changed not only the outer forms of the Accadian religion, but they infused into it a deeper and truer religious feeling. This inner change is best illustrated by what are called the Penitential Psalms,<sup>2</sup> which breathe the same spirit as that which pervades the Psalms of David; and by the teachings of a monotheistic sect, which show that at least some minds of spiritual vision had caught sight of the truth that there is but one God.

What lends to this religious movement a transcendent interest is the fact that this lofty idea, though it seems to have faded out in Chaldæa, was not lost to the world. In "Ur of the Chaldees," Abraham embraced the grand doctrine, which was to be the idea of the future. He carried it up into Palestine, and a long line of Hebrew teachers handed it down to later generations, as the most precious bequest of all antiquity.

There were still other outcomes of this old Chaldæan religion

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. I. p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> See *Records of the Past*, Vol. VII. pp. 153-156.



which were destined to exert a wide-spread and potent influence upon the minds of men. Out of the Sabæan Semitic element grew astrology, the art of forecasting events by the aspect of the stars, which was most elaborately and ingeniously developed, until the fame of the Chaldæan astrologers was spread throughout the ancient world, while the spell of their art held in thralldom the mind of mediæval Europe.

Out of the Shamanistic element contributed by the Turanian Accadians, grew a system of magic and divination which had a most profound influence not only upon all the Eastern nations, including the Jews, but also upon the later peoples of the West. Mediæval necromancy and witchcraft were, in large part, an unchanged inheritance from Chaldæa.<sup>1</sup>

**The "Chaldæan Genesis."** — The cosmological myths and legends of the Chaldæans were the fountain-head of the stream of Hebrew cosmogony.

The discoveries and patient labors of various scholars have reproduced, in a more or less perfect form, from the legendary tablets, the Chaldæan account of the Creation of the World, of an ancestral Paradise and the Tree of Life with its cherub wardens, of the Deluge, and of the Tower of Babel.<sup>2</sup>

All these legends and myths are remarkably like the Biblical accounts of the several matters with which they deal, showing that before the Abrahamic clan migrated from Chaldæa, all this literature had become the prized and sacred possession of the peoples of the Chaldæan plains.

<sup>1</sup> The popular beliefs of Europe in the Middle Ages respecting evil spirits, exorcisms, and charms, and regarding witches and the characteristics of the Chief of the powers of evil, are simply survivals from the old Chaldæan culture. Thus the Chaldæan witch was believed to possess the power of flying through the air on a stick, and "the features of the mediæval devil may be traced on an Assyrian bas-relief, which represents the dragon of chaos, with claws, tail, horns, and wings, pursued by the sun-god, Merodack." — SAYCE, *The Ancient Empires of the East*, pp. 154, 155.

<sup>2</sup> Consult especially George Smith's *The Chaldæan Account of Genesis*; see also *Records of the Past*, Vol. VII. pp. 127, 131.

The Chaldæan versions of these traditions, however, are not so simple and pure as the Biblical narratives ; for, being the legends and myths of a people of a polytheistic belief, they are of course tinged with the religious notions of those who invented or recited them, and attribute to various deities works and acts which the Hebrew writers refer to the one God, Jehovah. In a word, all these ancient legends and myths were moralized and spiritualized by the great teachers and prophets of the Hebrew race.

**The Chaldæan Epic of Izdubar.**— Besides their cosmological myths, or stories of the origin of things, the Chaldæans had a vast



CHALDÆAN TABLET WITH PARTS OF THE DELUGE LEGEND.

number of so-called heroic and nature myths. The most noted of these form what is known as the Epic of Izdubar (Nimrod?), which is doubtless the oldest epic of the race. This is in twelve parts, and is really a solar myth, which recounts the twelve labors of the sun in his yearly passage through the twelve signs of the Chaldæan zodiac.

This epic was carried to the West, by the way of Phœnicia and Asia Minor, and played a great part in the mythology of the

Greeks and Romans. "The twelve labors of Heracles may be traced back to the adventures of Gisdhubar (Izdubar) as recorded in the twelve books of the great epic of Chaldæa." (Sayce.)

And as the Chaldæan hero Izdubar is the prototype of the Greek hero Heracles, so many other heroes and heroines of the Chaldæan stories are the originals or analogues of those of the classical myths. Thus Ishtar (Istar), the Chaldæan goddess of love, reappears in the West as the Aphrodite of the Greeks. One of the most beautiful passages in the great Chaldæan epic tells of Ishtar's descent into the realm of shades in search of her beloved Tammuz, just as Aphrodite descends into Hades for her lost Adonis. There is a Chaldæan Prometheus, too,—Zu, by name,—who steals the lightning of Bel, and suffers punishment for the act.

**Science.**—In astronomy and its associate science, arithmetic, the Chaldæans made substantial progress. The clear sky and unbroken horizon of the Chaldæan plains, lending an unusually brilliant aspect to the heavens, naturally led the Chaldæans to the study of the stars. They early divided the zodiac into twelve signs, and named the zodiacal constellations, a memorial of their astronomical attainments which will remain forever inscribed upon the great circle of the heavens; they foretold eclipses, constructed gnomons, or sun-dials, of various patterns, divided the year into twelve months, and the day and night into twelve hours each, and invented or devised the week of seven days, the number of days in the week being determined, it seems, by the course of the moon. "The 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st, and 28th days of the lunar month were kept like the Jewish Sabbath, and were actually so named in Assyria. . . . On these days it was forbidden, at all events in the Accadian period, to cook food, to change one's dress or wear white robes, to offer sacrifice, to ride in a chariot, to legislate, to practice augury, or even to use medicine."<sup>1</sup>

The influence upon the world of this remarkable calendar,

<sup>1</sup> Sayce, *The Ancient Empires of the East*, p. 171; see also *Records of the Past*, Vol. VII. p. 157.

worked out by the old Chaldæan star-gazers and priest-astronomers, has been, and is still, so great, that it may fairly be regarded as one of the most important and potent factors in the civilization of the world.

In arithmetic, also, the Chaldæans made considerable advance. A tablet has been found which contains the squares and cubes of the numbers from one to sixty. The duodecimal system in numbers was the invention of the Chaldæans, and it is from them probably that the system has come to us.

**Conclusion.** — This hasty glance at the beginnings of civilization among the primitive peoples of the Euphrates valley, will serve to give us at least some little idea of how much we owe to the old Chaldæans. In the words of Rawlinson, "Chaldæa stands forth as the great parent and inventress of Asiatic civilization"; and as we now know the classical nations, whose inheritors we are, to have received from the Oriental nations many at least of the primary elements of their art, of their literature, and of their mythology, we may say that Chaldæa was one of the main sources — Egypt was the other — of the stream of universal history.

And now, having found in the remote civilizations of Egypt and Chaldæa the sources of this great stream, we shall proceed to trace its course through the ages, and shall watch its rising tide, as it receives fresh contributions on every hand, until it grows into the wide and deep stream of modern culture.

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## CHAPTER V.

## THE ASSYRIAN MONARCHY.

(From an unknown date to 606 B.C.)

**Introduction.** — In preceding chapters we traced the beginnings of Asiatic civilization among the early settlers of the lowlands of the Euphrates. Meanwhile, as has already been noticed, farther to the north, upon the banks of the Tigris, were growing into strength and prominence a rival Semitic people — the Assyrians — to whom were now to be transferred, for preservation and enrichment, the arts and sciences and primitive culture of the Chaldæan plains.

In tracing the dynastic, or political, history of Assyria, we shall mention only those kings whose wide conquests or great works, or the strength of whose character or the greatness of whose misfortunes, have caused their names to live among the renowned personages of the ancient world.

**Tiglath-Pileser I.** (1130–1110 B.C.). — It is not until about two centuries after the conquest of Chaldæa by the Assyrian prince Tiglath-Nin (see p. 63), that we find a sovereign of renown at the head of Assyrian affairs. This was Tiglath-Pileser I., who came to the throne about 1130 B.C. We know more of his reign than of that of any preceding king, through the fortunate discovery of a clay cylinder containing the royal records. It details at great length the various war-expeditions of Tiglath-Pileser, and describes the great works which he constructed. So we can listen to the king himself, while, in his self-laudatory style, he narrates his great exploits, and glories in the number and extent of his conquests.

“There fell into my hands altogether,” says this inscription, “between the commencement of my reign and my fifth year, forty-

two countries, with their kings, from the banks of the river Zab to the banks of the Euphrates, the country of the Khatti,<sup>1</sup> and the upper ocean of the setting sun [Mediterranean]. I brought them under one government; I took hostages from them; and I imposed on them tribute and offerings.”<sup>2</sup>

He speaks as follows of the restoration of a temple: “In the beginning of my reign, Anu and Vul, the great gods, my lords, guardians of my steps, gave me a command to repair this their shrine. So I made bricks; I levelled the earth; . . . fifty feet deep I prepared the lower foundations of the temple of Anu and Vul. From its foundation to its roof I built it up better than it was before. I also built two lofty towers in honor of their noble godships; and the holy place, a spacious hall, I consecrated for the convenience of their worshippers, and to accommodate their votaries, who were numerous as the stars of heaven.”

The inscription closes with the following imprecations upon any one who shall injure the tablets and cylinders placed in the temple:—

“Whoever shall abrade or injure my tablets and cylinders, or shall moisten them with water, or scorch them with fire, or expose them to the air, or in the holy place of God shall assign them a place where they cannot be seen or understood, or shall erase the writing and inscribe his own name, or shall divide the sculptures (?) and break them off my tablets, may Anu and Vul, the Great Gods, my lords, assign his name to perdition! May they curse him with an irrevocable curse! May they cause his sovereignty to perish! . . . May Vul in his fury tear up the produce of his land! . . . May he not be called happy for a single day! May his name and his race perish!”

**Asshur-izer-pal** (883–858 B.C.).—We pass an interval of more than two centuries, during which Assyria almost “drops below the historical horizon,” and then find upon the throne Asshur-izer-pal,

<sup>1</sup> Assyrian for Hittites. These people proved as formidable enemies of the Assyrian kings as they had been of the early Pharaohs. See above, pp. 25, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. II. p. 68.



under whom the Assyrian Empire enjoyed an era of unusual magnificence. This king made several expeditions into the surrounding countries, punishing cruelly, by crucifixion and burning, all that dared to resist his authority.

But while, like all the Assyrian kings, he was cruel and unrelenting in war, he seemed not insensible to the gentler influences of peace ; for he was a generous patron of sculpture and architecture. Many of the cities of his empire were adorned by him with magnificent palaces and temples. Of the capital Calah, overlooking the Tigris, which city Asshur-izer-pal embellished with his most splendid edifices, Rawlinson, forming his picture from the nature and extent of the ruins, declares that "when the setting sun lighted up the view with the gorgeous hues seen only under an Eastern sky, it must have seemed to the traveller who beheld it for the first time like a vision from fairy-land."

**Shalmaneser II.** (858-823 B.C.). — Asshur-izer-pal was followed by Shalmaneser II., who reigned thirty-five years. During his rule this warlike king made between twenty and thirty military expeditions against various countries, and held in subjection almost all the peoples between the Mediterranean and the mountains of Persia.

Shalmaneser II. was the last strong king of what is known as the First Empire. After his death, province after province and city after city revolted against the feeble sovereigns that held the throne, until the empire was virtually dissolved.

**Tiglath-Pileser II.** (745-727 B.C.). — With this king, who was a usurper, begins what is known as the Second Empire. He was a man of great energy and of undoubted military talent. Syria, Palestine, and Phœnicia were conquered, or brought into a state of vassalage ; and Babylonia, which at this time was broken up into a great number of petty states, was overrun, and Tiglath-Pileser assumed the ancient title of "King of Accad and Shumir." Thus the Assyrian power was once more extended over the greater part of Southwestern Asia.

But what renders the reign of this king a landmark not only in Assyrian, but, we may almost say, in universal history, is the fact that he was not a mere conqueror like his predecessors, but a political organizer of great capacity.

Hitherto the empires that had arisen in Western Asia consisted simply of tributary or vassal cities and states, each of which, having its own king, was ready at the first favorable moment to revolt against its suzerain, who, like a mediæval feudal king, was simply a great overlord, "a king of kings." Now, Tiglath-Pileser introduced, or at least first put into practice in a large way, the plan of reducing conquered states to provinces,—that is, instead of allowing the princes that he conquered to rule as his vassals, he put in their places Assyrian magistrates, or viceroys, upon whose loyalty to himself he could depend.

This system gave a more compact and permanent character to his conquests. It is true he was not able to carry out his system perfectly; but in realizing the plan to the extent that he did, he laid the basis of the power and glory of the great kings who followed him upon the Assyrian throne, and made the later Assyrian Empire, to a certain degree, the prototype of the succeeding world-empires of Darius, Alexander, and Cæsar.

**Sargon** (722–705 B.C.).—Sargon was one of the greatest conquerors and sovereigns of the Second Empire. In 722 B.C. he captured Samaria, the siege of which had been commenced by his predecessor Shalmaneser IV., and carried away the Ten Tribes into captivity beyond the Tigris. From this time the kingdom of Israel disappears from among the states of the East. The larger part of the captives were scattered among the cities of Media, and probably became, for the most part, merged with the population of that province. During this reign the Egyptians and their allies, in the first encounter (the battle of Raphia, 720 B.C.) between the empires of the Euphrates and the Nile valley, suffered a severe defeat, and the ancient kingdom of the Pharaohs became tributary to Assyria.

Sargon was a famous builder. Near the foot of the Persian hills he founded a large city, which he named for himself; and there he erected a royal residence, described in the inscriptions as "a palace of incomparable magnificence," the site of which is now preserved by the vast mounds of Khorsabad.

**Sennacherib** (705-681 B.C.). — Sennacherib, the son of Sargon, came to the throne 705 B.C. We must accord to him the first place of renown among all the great names of the Assyrian Empire. His name, connected as it is with the narrative of Jerusalem's marvellous deliverance from the power of the Assyrian army, and with many of the most wonderful discoveries among the ruined palaces of Nineveh, has become as familiar to the ear as that of Nebuchadnezzar in the story of Babylon.

The fulness of the royal inscriptions of this reign enables us to permit Sennacherib, like Tiglath-Pileser I., to tell us in his own words of his great works and military expeditions. Respecting the decoration of Nineveh, he says: "I raised again all the edifices of Nineveh, my royal city; I reconstructed all its old streets, and widened those that were too narrow. I have made the whole town a city shining like the sun."

Concerning an expedition against Hezekiah, king of Judah, he says: "I took forty-six of his strong fenced cities; and of the smaller towns which were scattered about I took and plundered a countless number. And from these places I captured and carried off as spoil 200,150 people, old and young, male and female, together with horses and mares, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates, so as to prevent escape."<sup>1</sup>

While Sennacherib was besieging Jerusalem, the king of Egypt appeared in the field in the south with aid for Hezekiah. This caused Sennacherib to draw off his forces from the siege to meet the new enemy; but near the frontiers of Egypt the Assyrian host,

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. II. p. 161.

according to the Hebrew account, was smitten by "the angel of the Lord,"<sup>1</sup> and the king returned with a shattered army and without glory to his capital, Nineveh.

Sennacherib laid a heavy hand upon Babylon, which at this time was the leading city of Chaldæa. That city having revolted, Sennacherib captured the place, and, as his inscription declares, destroyed it "root and branch," casting the rubbish into the "River of Babylon."

Sennacherib employed the closing years of his reign in the digging of canals and in the erection of a splendid palace at Nineveh. He was finally murdered by his two eldest sons, who were led to the act through jealousy of their younger brother Esarhaddon, the Joseph of the family, apparently.

**Esarhaddon I.** (680-668 B.C.).—The first work of Esarhaddon, who, though the youngest son of Sennacherib, became the successor of his father, was to drive the parricides out of the country; then he entered upon his renowned wars, and gave himself to his numerous architectural works, for he was a great builder as well as a great warrior.

He performed the feat, probably never accomplished by any other conqueror, of penetrating Central Arabia, and capturing the cities of that desert-guarded region. During another campaign he led his army up the Nile, to the gates of Thebes.

Esarhaddon built four royal residences, erected many temples in the various cities of his empire, and restored Babylon,—which his father, it will be recalled, had razed to the ground,—making it again a great city.

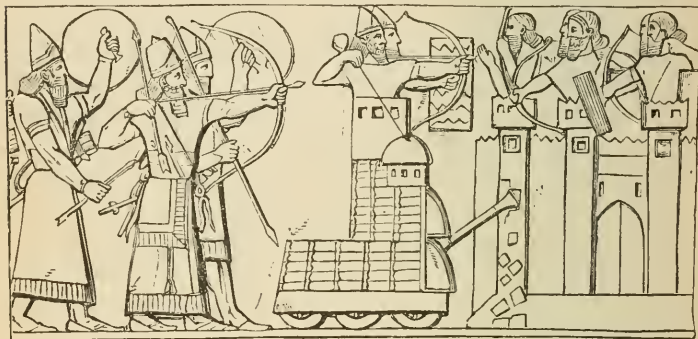
Sickness falling upon the monarch, he made his son Asshur-bani-pal joint ruler with himself, and died shortly after, leaving his renowned son as the sole head of the great empire.

**Asshur-bani-pal** (668-626? B.C.).—This king, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, is distinguished for his magnificent patronage of

<sup>1</sup> This expression is a Hebraism, meaning often any physical cause of destruction, as a plague or storm. In the present case, the destroying agency was probably a pestilence.

art and literature. During his reign Assyria enjoyed her Augustan age. Under the inspiration of his example and the encouragement of his favor, a great literary enthusiasm sprang up at Nineveh; and within the walls of his palace in that city was collected the largest and most important of Assyrian libraries.

But Asshur-bani-pal was also possessed of a warlike spirit. He broke to pieces, with a terrible energy, in swift campaigns, the



SIEGE OF A CITY, SHOWING USE OF BATTERING-RAM. (From Nimrud.)

enemies of his empire. Susiana especially was made a terrible example of his vengeance; its cities were levelled, and the whole country was laid waste. All the scenes of his sieges and battles he caused to be sculptured on the walls of his palace at Nineveh. These pictured panels are now in the British Museum. They are a perfect Iliad in stone.

**Saracus, or Esarhaddon II.** (? -606 B.C.).—Saracus was the last of the long line of Assyrian kings. His reign was filled with misfortunes for himself and his kingdom. For nearly or quite seven centuries the Ninevite kings had lorded it over the East. There was scarcely a state in all Western Asia that had not, during this time, felt the weight of their conquering arms; scarcely a people that had not suffered their cruel punishments, or tasted the bitterness of their servitude.

But now swift misfortunes were bearing down upon the oppressor from every quarter. The Scythian hordes, breaking through the mountain gates on the north, spread a new terror throughout the upper Assyrian provinces; from the mountain defiles on the east issued the armies of the recent-grown empire of the Aryan Medes, led by the renowned Cyaxares; from the southern lowlands, anxious to aid in the overthrow of the hated oppressor, the Babylonians, led by the youthful Nebuchadnezzar, the son of the traitor viceroy Nabopolassar, joined, it appears, the Medes as allies, and together they laid close siege to the Assyrian capital.

The operations of the besiegers seem to have been aided by an unusual inundation of the Tigris, which undermined a section of the city walls, and caused a wide breach in the defences. At all events the place was taken, and dominion passed away forever from the proud capital<sup>1</sup> (606 B.C.). Two hundred years later, when Xenophon with his Ten Thousand Greeks, in his memorable retreat, passed the spot, the once great city was a crumbling mass of ruins, of which he could not even learn the name.

<sup>1</sup> Saracus, in his despair, is said to have erected a funeral pyre within one of the courts of his palace, and, mounting the pile with the members of his family, to have perished with them in the flames; but this is doubtless a poetical embellishment of the story.



## CHAPTER VI.

INSTITUTIONS, ARCHITECTURE, AND LITERATURE OF  
THE ASSYRIANS.

**Nature of the Assyrian Empire.**—The Assyrian state is a good type of all the great empires that have succeeded one another upon the soil of Asia. It was simply a heterogeneous mass of peoples and races, held together by external force, and united by no inner bonds of religion or customs or language.

Attempts, indeed, were made by some of the Assyrian kings, notably by Tiglath-Pileser II. (see p. 78), to consolidate the varied elements which wide conquests had brought within the limits of the empire, into something like national unity. But these efforts did not proceed from a desire to promote the welfare of the peoples over whom they ruled; their object was simply to strengthen the power of the dominant state and to rivet, more securely, the chains of the subject nations. The sovereigns endeavored to Assyrianize the remotest provinces by the wholesale transference of the population of a conquered country to a new region, in order that, with the old ties of country and home thus severed, the new generation might the more easily forget past wrongs and old traditions and customs, and become blended with the peoples about them. Thus, the Ten Tribes of Israel were carried away from their homes by Sargon and scattered among the Median towns, where they became so mingled with the native population of the country as to be inquired after even to this day as "the lost tribes."

It was inevitable that a kingdom of this nature should be ever threatening dissolution the moment the organizing genius that had consolidated it was embarrassed by accident or removed by death.

Hence the constant efforts necessary to reconquer revolted provinces, and to refasten the chains upon states that were constantly breaking away from the central authority. Hence, also, the disturbances and uprisings that accompanied almost every dynastic change.

**The Religion.** — The Assyrians were Semites, and as such they possessed the deep religious spirit that has always distinguished the peoples of this family. In this respect they were very much like the Hebrews. The wars which the Assyrian monarchs waged were not alone wars of conquest, but were, in a certain sense, crusades made for the purpose of extending the worship and authority of the gods of Assyria. They have been likened to the wars of the Hebrew kings, and again to the conquests of the Saracens.

As with the wars, so was it with the architectural works of these sovereigns. Greater attention, indeed, was paid to the palace in Assyria than in Babylonia; yet the inscriptions, as well as the ruins, of the upper country attest that the erection and adornment of the temples of the gods were matters of anxious and constant care on the part of the Assyrian monarchs. Their accounts of the construction and dedication of temples for their gods afford striking parallels to the Bible account of the building of the temple at Jerusalem by King Solomon.

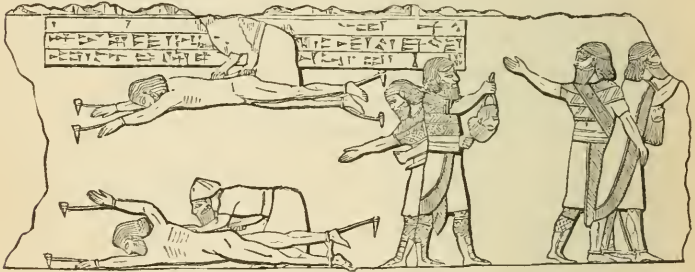
Not less prominently manifested is the religious spirit of these kings in what we may call their sacred literature, as testifies the following prayer of Asshur-bani-pal, offered to one of his great gods: "May the look of pity that shines in thine eternal face dispel my griefs. May I never feel the anger and wrath of the God. May my omissions and my sins be wiped out. May I find reconciliation with him, for I am the servant of his power, who is the author of the great gods. May thy powerful face come to my help: may it shine like heaven, and bless me with happiness and abundance of riches."<sup>1</sup>

As to the Assyrian pantheon and worship, these were in all their essential features so similar to those of the later Chaldæan system,

<sup>1</sup> See Lenormant's *Ancient History of the East*, Vol. I. p. 418.

already described (see p. 71), that any detailed account of them here is unnecessary. One difference, however, in the two systems should be noted. The place occupied by Il, or Ra, as the head of the pantheon of Chaldæa is in Assyria given to the national deity Asshur, whose emblem was a winged circle with the figure of a man within, the whole perhaps symbolizing, according to Rawlinson, eternity, omnipresence, and wisdom.

**Cruelty of the Assyrians.**—The Assyrians have been called the “Romans of Asia.” They were a proud, martial, cruel, and unrelenting race. Although possessing, as we have just noticed, a deep and genuine religious feeling, still the Assyrian monarchs often displayed in their treatment of prisoners the disposition of savages. In common with most Asiatics, they had no respect for



ASSYRIANS FLAYING THEIR PRISONERS.

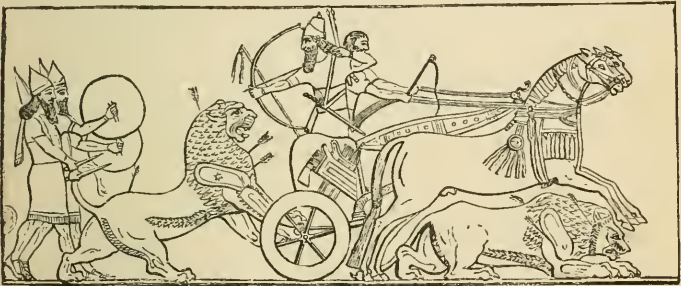
the body, but subjected captives to the most terrible mutilations. The sculptured marbles taken from the palaces exhibit the cruel tortures inflicted upon prisoners: kings are being led before their conqueror by means of hooks thrust through one or both lips;<sup>1</sup> other prisoners are being flayed alive; the eyes of some are being bored out with the point of a spear; and still others are having their tongues torn out.

An inscription by Asshur-nasir-pal, found in one of the palaces at Nimrud, runs as follows: “Their men, young and old, I took

<sup>1</sup> See 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10–13.

prisoners. Of some I cut off the feet and hands ; of others I cut off the noses, ears, and lips ; of the young men's ears I made a heap ; of the old men's heads I built a tower. I exposed their heads as a trophy in front of their city. The male children and the female children I burned in the flames."

**Royal Sports.**—The Assyrian king gloried in being, like the great Nimrod, "a mighty hunter before the Lord." In his inscriptions, the wild beasts he has slain are as carefully enumerated as the cities he has captured.<sup>1</sup> The monuments are covered with sculptures that represent the king engaged in the favorite royal sport. We see him slaying lions, bulls, and boars, as well



LION HUNT. (From Nineveh.)

as less dangerous animals of the chase, with which the uncultivated tracts of the country appear to have abounded.

Asshur-izer-pal had at Nineveh a menagerie, or hunting-park, filled with various animals, many of which were sent him as tribute by vassal princes. During a single hunting expedition into the desert regions of Mesopotamia, this monarch, according to his own inscriptions, slew three hundred and sixty lions, two hundred and fifty-seven wild cattle, and thirty buffaloes, besides capturing for his menagerie an immense number of ostriches, bears, and hyenas.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenormant's *Ancient History of the East*, Vol. I. p. 431.

<sup>2</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. I. p. 91.

**The Royal Cities.**—The capital of the Assyrian monarchy, like that of almost every other empire in Asia, was of a migratory character. There are scattered along the course of the Tigris the ruins of three royal cities—Asshur, Calneh, and Nineveh, or, as called at the present time, Kileh-Sherghat, Nimrud, and Koyunjik. Away from the Tigris, about ten miles to the northeast of Nineveh, is the mound of Khorsabad, which marks the site of the royal residence of Sargon.

The ruins of these royal cities of Assyria are very unlike those of the capital cities of Egypt. Enormous grass-grown mounds, enclosed by crumbled ramparts, alone mark the sites of the great cities of the Assyrian kings. The character of the remains arises from the nature of the building material. City walls, palaces, and temples were constructed chiefly of sun-dried bricks, so that the generation that raised them had scarcely passed away before they began to sink down into heaps of rubbish. The rains of many centuries have beaten down and deeply furrowed these mounds, while the grass has crept over them and made green alike the palaces of the kings and the temples of the gods.

**The Ruins of Nineveh.**—Lying upon the left bank of the Upper Tigris is a large quadrangular enclosure surrounded by heavy earthen ramparts, about eight miles in circuit. This is the site of ancient Nineveh, the immense enclosing ridges being the ruined city walls. These ramparts are still, in their crumbled condition, about fifty feet high (Xenophon says that they were one hundred and fifty feet high when he saw them), and average about one hundred and fifty in width. The lower part of the wall was constructed of solid stone masonry; the upper portion, of dried brick. This upper and frailer part, crumbling into earth, has completely buried the stone basement. The Turks quarry the stone from these old walls for their modern buildings. The bridge that spans the Tigris at Mosul (a native town just opposite the ruins of Nineveh) is constructed of stone dug from these ancient ramparts.

The regularity of the old walls is broken by large heaps of rub-

bish, which mark the position of the city gates and their flanking towers. In one of these mounds, excavated by Layard, were found several colossal winged bulls, the wardens of the entrance. The stone pavement was discovered worn into deep ruts by the chariot-wheels.

But the most interesting feature of the ruins is the great palace-mound, called by the natives Koyunjik. This mound covers an area of one hundred acres, and is from seventy to ninety feet high. It is traversed by deep ravines, worn in its mass by centuries of storms. Upon this great platform stood several of the most splendid palaces of the Ninevite kings.

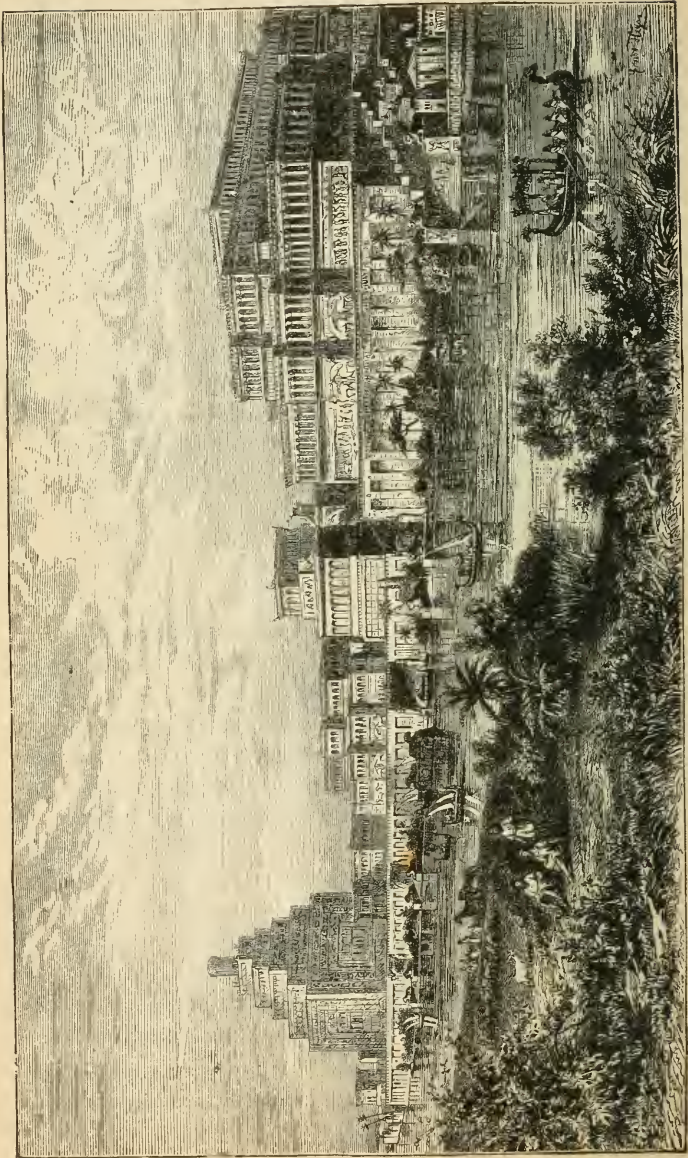
**Palace-Mounds and Palaces.** — In order to give a certain dignity to the royal residence, to secure the <sup>2</sup>fresh breezes, and to render them more <sup>3</sup>easily defended, the Assyrians, as well as the Babylonians and Persians, lifted their palaces upon lofty artificial terraces, or platforms. These eminences, which appear like natural flat-topped hills, were constructed with an almost incredible expenditure of human labor. Out of the material composing the mound of Koyunjik at Nineveh could be built four pyramids as large as that of Cheops. One at least of these gigantic mounds marks the site of each of the royal cities already mentioned.

The tops of these platforms are loaded with the débris of the Assyrian palaces. The swiftness with which the mud-wall edifices fell into dilapidation, an ambition to surpass all predecessors, and a superstitious fear in regard to occupying the palace of a deceased monarch led each king, upon his accession to the throne, to commence the erection of a new royal residence. Sometimes an entirely new site was chosen ; but often the new palace was erected alongside the old, upon the same platform.

The group of buildings constituting the royal residence was often of enormous extent ; the various courts, halls, corridors, and chambers of the Palace of Sennacherib, which surmounted the platform at Nineveh, covered an area of over ten acres. The palaces were usually one-storied.<sup>1</sup> The walls, constructed chiefly of

<sup>1</sup> The many-storied appearance of the restored palace in the accompanying cut, results, in the main, from the buildings being lifted upon a succession of terraces.

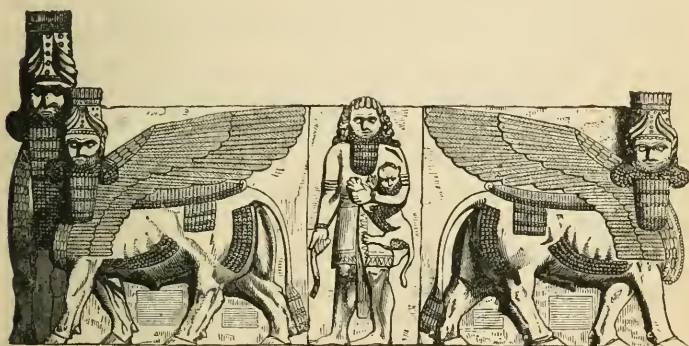




ASSYRIAN ROYAL PALACE AT NINEVEH. (Restored by Layard.)

dried brick, were immensely thick and heavy. The rooms and galleries were plastered with stucco, or panelled with precious woods, or lined with enamelled bricks. The main halls, however, were faced with slabs of alabaster, covered with sculptures and inscriptions, the illustrated narrative of the wars and labors of the monarch. There were two miles of such sculptured panelling at Koyunjik. At the portals of the palace, to guard the approach, were stationed the colossal human-headed bulls.

The immense courts upon which the chambers opened were the most important feature of the palace, as is still the case in all



SCULPTURES FROM A GATEWAY AT KHORSABAD.

Oriental residences, and were sumptuously decorated with symbolic sculptures, and surrounded with carved and painted balconies, supported usually upon wood columns encased in bronze plates, and crowned with capitals that were the original of the Grecian Ionic. These superb courts were used on special state occasions, the assembly being protected from the sun and weather by a rich awning, as the Roman emperors in later times shielded the multitudes in the amphitheatre.

An important adjunct of the palace was the temple, a copy of the tower-temples of the Chaldæans. Its position is marked at

present by a lofty conical mound, rising amidst and overlooking the palace ruins.

**Assyrian Explorations.** — Upon the decay of the Assyrian palaces, the material forming the upper part of the thick walls completely buried and protected all the lower portion of the structure. In this way their sculptures and inscriptions have been preserved through so many centuries, till brought to light by the recent excavations of French and English antiquarians.

In 1844 M. Botta, the French consul at Mosul, excavated the mound of Khorsabad, and astonished the world with most wonderful specimens of Assyrian art from the Palace of Sargon. The sculptured and lettered slabs were removed to the Museum of the Louvre, in Paris. Some years later, Layard disintombed the Palace of Sennacherib, and those of other kings at Nineveh and Calneh, and enriched the British Museum with the treasures of his search. These disintombed palaces have thrown as strong a light upon the arts and history of the ancient Assyrians as the excavated cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum have shed upon the arts and domestic life of the Romans.

**The Royal Library at Nineveh.** — Within the palace of Asshur-bani-pal at Nineveh, Layard discovered what is known as the Royal Library. There were two chambers, the floors of which were heaped with books, like the Chaldæan tablets already described. The number of books in the collection has been estimated at ten thousand. The writing upon some of the tablets is so minute that it cannot be read without the aid of a magnifying-glass.<sup>1</sup> We learn from the inscriptions that a librarian had charge of the collection. Catalogues of the books have been found, made out on clay tablets. The library was open to the public,

<sup>1</sup> "The discovery of a crystal lens on the site of Nineveh suggests that some of the microscopic characters on the tablets were inscribed with artificial aid, as well as the possibility of a rude kind of telescope having been employed for astronomical observations. At all events, one astronomical record states that 'Venus rises, and in its orbit duly grows in size.'" — SAYCE, *The Ancient Empires of the East*, p. 173.

for an inscription says, "I [Asshur-bani-pal] wrote upon the tablets; I placed them in my palace for the instruction of my people."

Asshur-bani-pal, as we have already learned, was the Augustus of Assyria. It was under his patronage and direction that most of the books were prepared and placed in the Ninevite collection. The greater part of these were copies of older Chaldæan tablets; for the literature of the Assyrians, as well as their arts and sciences, was borrowed almost in a body from the Chaldæans. All the old libraries of the low-country were ransacked, and copies of their tablets made for the Royal Library at Nineveh. Rare treasures were secured from the libraries founded or enlarged by Sargon of Agadê (see p. 60). The great religious and astronomical works which he had compiled were copied with reverential care; for all this early Chaldæan literature was at this time not only sacred, but classical. In the case especially of the tablets that held the sacred psalms, both the ancient Accadian text and the Semitic interlineal translation (see p. 68) were religiously copied by the Assyrian scribe, although the old Turanian speech of the original inhabitants of Accad and Shumir had now been a dead language probably for more than a thousand years.

In this way was preserved the most valuable portion of the early Chaldæan literature, which would otherwise have been lost to the world.

**The Tablets and their Contents.** — The Assyrian tablets, as has already been noted, were in form like the Chaldæan. They embrace a great variety of subjects; the larger part, however, are lexicons and treatises on grammar, and various other works intended as text-books for scholars. Perhaps the most curious of the tablets yet found are notes issued by the government, and made redeemable in gold and silver on presentation at the king's treasury. Tablets of this character have been found bearing date as early as 625 B.C. It would seem from this that the Assyrians had very correct notions of the representative character of paper (tablet) money.



Other books are found to treat of laws, of chronology and history, and of the natural sciences. In natural history we find tablets exhibiting classifications into families and genera of all the animals inhabiting the different provinces of the Assyrian Empire,—a common and scientific name being attached to each species. "No doubt," says Lenormant, "the great divisions of this classification are those of a very rudimentary science, but we may well be astonished to find that the Assyrians had already invented a scientific nomenclature similar in principle to that of Linnæus."

From one part of the library, which seems to have been the archives proper, were taken copies of treaties, reports of officers of the government, deeds, wills, mortgages, and contracts. One tablet, known as "the Will of Sennacherib," conveys to certain priests some personal property to be held in trust for his son Esarhaddon. This is the oldest will in existence.<sup>1</sup>

**Influence of Assyria upon Civilization.**—The recent excavations among the Assyrian palaces, and the discovery of the key to the cuneiform inscriptions, which has opened to us the treasures of the libraries of the Euphrates valley, have greatly modified our views respecting the influence of Asiatic art and culture upon European civilization, and have given a sort of epic unity to history. As many of the elements of our modern civilization were received as an inheritance from Greece and Rome, so in turn, we now find, was their culture enriched by valuable gifts from the older civilizations of the East. As the Tiber and the Ilissus are classic streams to us, so were the Nile and the Euphrates classic rivers to the Greeks and Romans. Thence these younger nations received much that the Oriental peoples had invented or sought

<sup>1</sup> We give the text of this interesting document: "I, Sennacherib, king of multitudes, king of Assyria, have given chains of gold, stores of ivory, a cup of gold, crowns and chains besides, all the riches of which there are heaps, crystal and another precious stone and bird's stone; one and a half manehs, two and a half cibi, according to weight, to Esar-Haddon, my son; . . . the treasure of the Temple of ANUK and (NEBO)-IRIK-ERBA, the harpists of Nebo."

out in art, science, and philosophy. As Birch, the Egyptologist, says, "From the East originated germs of thought which grew up into blossoms amongst other races long after the parent stem had lain a sapless trunk in the distant regions of the Euphrates and the Nile."

The Greeks received the germs of their mimetic, or sculptural, art from the Euphrates by the way of Asia Minor or through the maritime cities of Phœnicia. "Between the works of Ninevite artists and the early works of the Greeks," says Lenormant, "even to the Æginetans, we may observe an astonishing connection; the celebrated primitive bas-relief at Athens, known by the common name of the 'Warrior of Marathon,' seems as if detached from the walls of Khorsabad or Koyunjik."<sup>1</sup> But the genius of the Greek artists always transformed what they borrowed. Beneath their touch "the hard and rigid lines of Assyrian sculpture," as Layard says, "were converted into the flowing draperies and classic forms of the highest order of art."

Fergusson thus sums up the results of his studies among the palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis: "Egypt may, indeed, have been the schoolmistress from whom the ancient world derived half her science and her art; but the nations from whom we are descended were born in Assyria, and out of her they brought all their sympathies, all their innate civilization."<sup>2</sup> And Rawlinson, after acquainting himself with the arts and sciences of the Euphrates valley, and the contents of the Assyrian libraries, declares that "it was from the East . . . that Greece derived her architecture, her sculpture, her science, her philosophy, her mathematical knowledge, — in a word, her intellectual life."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenormant's *Ancient History of the East*, Vol. I. p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> Fergusson's *Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. III. p. 76.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE BABYLONIAN MONARCHY.

(625-538 B.C.)

**Babylonian Affairs from 1300 to 625 B.C.** — During the six centuries and more that intervened between the conquest of the old Chaldæan monarchy by the Assyrian king Tiglathi-Nin and the successful revolt of the low countries under Nabopolassar, the Babylonian peoples bore the Assyrian yoke very impatiently. Again and again they made violent efforts to throw it off; and in several instances they succeeded, and for a time enjoyed home rulers. But for the most part the whole country as far as the "Sea," as the Persian Gulf is called in the inscriptions, was a dependency of the great overshadowing empire of the north.

Belonging to this period, however, are two names which we should fix in our minds before we proceed to speak of the great kings of the later Babylonian monarchy. These are Nabonassar and Merodach-Baladan. The former reigned in Babylon about one hundred years before the overthrow of Nineveh (from 747 to 733 B.C.). He was evidently a strong and self-reliant man; for under him Babylon succeeded in freeing herself from the Assyrian yoke, and enjoyed a short-lived independence. Nabonassar destroyed the records of the kings that had preceded him, probably because he thought they reflected no glory on his country. Consequently, following ages were obliged to reckon dates from his reign, which was called the "Era of Nabonassar."

Merodach-Baladan (721-709 B.C.) is brought to our notice because it was he who, when Hezekiah, king of Judæa, was sick, and it was reported in Babylon that, as a sign of his recovery, the shadow had gone back several degrees on the dial of Ahaz, sent

commissioners to Jerusalem, ostensibly to congratulate the Hebrew monarch on his recovery, and to make inquiry respecting the reported astronomical wonder, a matter in which the Chaldean astrologers would naturally be interested. From what followed, it is thought that the embassy was really a political one, having for its object the forming of an alliance, embracing Judah, Egypt, and Babylonia, against the Assyrian king.

**Nabopolassar** (625-604 B.C.).—Nabopolassar was the first king of what is properly called the Babylonian monarchy. When troubles and misfortunes began to thicken about the last Assyrian king, Saracus, he intrusted to the care of Nabopolassar, as his viceroy, the towns and provinces of the South. The chance now presented of obtaining a crown proved too great a temptation for the satrap's fidelity to his master. He revolted and became independent (625 B.C.). Later, he entered into an alliance with the Median king, Cyaxares, against his former sovereign (see p. 83). This alliance was cemented by the betrothal of Amytis, the young and beautiful daughter of Cyaxares, to Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar. Through the overthrow of Nineveh and the break-up of the Assyrian Empire, the new Babylonian kingdom received large accessions of territory.

Nabopolassar in his old age intrusted the conduct of important expeditions to his son Nebuchadnezzar, whose relations to his royal sire, with his brilliant victories over his father's enemies, remind us of the "Black Prince" and Edward III. of England.

**Nebuchadnezzar** (604-561 B.C.).—Nebuchadnezzar was far away from Babylon, either in Southern Palestine or in Egypt, chastising Pharaoh-Necho for an invasion of Syria, when intelligence reached him of his father's death. He acted with that quick decision and energy which characterized all his subsequent life. Leaving his army to be led back to Babylonia by the usual military route up through Syria and around the northern end of the desert, he himself, with a few attendants, pushed directly across the desert, and in a few days reached the capital, before any plots against his succession could be perfected.

With the energy of a Napoleon, Nebuchadnezzar now began the conduct of his brilliant campaigns, and the superintendence of those gigantic works that rendered Babylon the wonder of the Greeks, and have caused her name to pass into all histories and literatures as the synonym of material power and magnificence.

Jerusalem, having repeatedly revolted, was finally taken and sacked. The temple was stripped of its sacred vessels of silver and gold, which were carried away to Babylon, and the temple itself with the adjoining palace was given to the flames; the people, save a miserable remnant, were also borne away into the "Great Captivity" (586 B.C.). Zedekiah, under whom the last revolt took place, was punished by having his eyes put out, after having seen "his sons slain before his face."

With Jerusalem subdued, Nebuchadnezzar pushed with all his forces the siege of the Phœnician city of Tyre, whose investment had been commenced several years before. In striking language the prophet Ezekiel describes the length and hardness of the siege: "Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled."<sup>1</sup> After a siege of thirteen years, the city seems to have fallen into the hands of the Babylonian king, and his authority was now undisputed from the Zagros Mountains to the Mediterranean.

The numerous captives of his many wars, embracing peoples of almost every nation in Western Asia, enabled Nebuchadnezzar to rival even the Egyptian Pharaohs in the execution of enormous works requiring an immense expenditure of human labor. The works which we may with very great certainty ascribe to this prince are the following: the repair of the Great Walls of Babylon; the Great Palace in the royal quarter of the city; the celebrated Hanging Gardens; vast quays along the Euphrates, to confine it in its course through the capital; and gigantic reservoirs, canals, and various engineering works, embracing a vast system of irrigation that reached every part of Babylonia.

In addition to all these works, the indefatigable monarch seems

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxix. 18.

to have either rebuilt or repaired almost every city and temple throughout the entire country. There are said to be at least a hundred sites in the tract immediately about Babylon which give evidence, by inscribed bricks bearing his legend, of the marvellous activity and energy of this monarch.

In the midst of all these gigantic undertakings, surrounded by a brilliant court of councillors and flatterers, the reason of the king was suddenly and mysteriously clouded.<sup>1</sup> After a period the cloud passed away, "the glory of his kingdom, his honor, and brightness returned unto him." But it was the splendor of the evening; for the old monarch soon after died at the age of eighty, worn out by the toils and cares of a reign of forty-three years, the longest, most memorable, and instructive in the annals of the Babylonian or Assyrian kings.

**Successors of Nebuchadnezzar** (561-555 B.C.). — The reigns of Evil-Merodach (son of Nebuchadnezzar), Neriglissar, and Labosoracus (Laborosoarchod) were all short and uneventful. The first and last both met with violent deaths. With Labosoracus ended the dynasty of Nabopolassar.

**The Fall of Babylon.** — In 555 B.C., Nabonadius (= Nabonidos), one of the nobles that had conspired against the life of the last sovereign, was placed upon the throne. He seems to have associated with himself in the government his son Belshazzar, who shared with his father the duties and honors of royalty, apparently on terms of equal co-sovereignty.

To the east of the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, beyond the ranges of the Zagros, there had been growing up an Aryan kingdom, the Medo-Persian, which, at the time now reached by us, had excited by its aggressive spirit the alarm of all the nations

<sup>1</sup> "Nebuchadnezzar fell a victim to that mental aberration which has often proved the penalty of despotism, but in the strange and degrading form to which physicians have given the name of lycanthropy; in which the patient, fancying himself a beast, rejects clothing and ordinary food, and even (as in this case) the shelter of a roof, disuses articulate speech, and sometimes persists in going on all-fours." — SMITH, *Ancient History of the East*, p. 357.

of Western Asia. For purposes of mutual defence, the king of Babylon, and Cræsus, the well-known monarch of Lydia, a state of Asia Minor, formed an alliance against Cyrus, the strong and ambitious sovereign of the Medes and Persians. This league awakened the resentment of Cyrus, and after punishing Cræsus and depriving him of his kingdom (see p. 130), he collected his forces to chastise the Babylonian king.

Anticipating the attack, Nabonadius had strengthened the defences of Babylon, and stationed around it supporting armies. But he was able to avert the fatal blow for only a few years. Risking a battle in the open field, his army was defeated, and the gates of the capital were thrown open to the Persians (538 B.C.).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The device of turning the Euphrates, which Herodotus makes an incident of the siege, was not resorted to by Cyrus; but it seems that a little later (in 521-519 B.C.), the city, having revolted, was actually taken in this way by the Persian king Darius. Herodotus confused the two events. See Sayce, *The Ancient Empires of the East*, p. 145.

The account that has usually been given of the fall of the great city, as gathered from the Greek writer Herodotus and from the Bible, is in substance as follows: At the dead of night, when the young king (Belshazzar, who is the only king noticed by the tradition) and all his court were giving themselves up to song and revelry, attendant upon the celebration of a great Babylonian festival, Cyrus, having previously dug with great labor immense channels, turned the course of the Euphrates, which ran directly through the city enclosure, and then led his troops along the river bed till within the line of the ramparts. Upon mounting the river steps, the soldiers found, as they had hoped, the gates unguarded, and in a few moments were in the streets of the capital. The cry of alarm ran along the broad avenues,\* and at last fell upon the affrighted ears of the revellers in the palace. To add to their dismay, a warning hand, it is said, appeared against the wall, and traced there the words *Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*, which Daniel, hastily called, interpreted to the king as meaning, "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldæans, slain." †

\* "One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end." — Jer. li. 31.

† Dan. v. 25-30.

With the fall of Babylon, the seat of empire in the East, which now for two or three thousand years had been in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, was transferred to Persepolis, the Persian capital, on the table-lands of Iran. Thus the sceptre of dominion, borne for so many centuries by Semitic princes, was given into the hands of the Aryan peoples, who were destined, from this time forward, to shape the course of events, and control the affairs of civilization.

*The Great Edifices of Babylon.*

The deep impression which Babylon produced upon the early Greek travellers was made chiefly by her vast architectural works, — her temples, palaces, elevated gardens, and great walls. The Hanging Gardens of Nebuchadnezzar and the walls of the city were reckoned among the Seven Wonders of the World.

**The Temple of the Seven Spheres.** — The Babylonians, like their predecessors the Chaldæans, accorded to the sacred edifice the place of pre-eminence among their architectural works. Upon the temples of the gods were lavished the wealth of the kingdom.

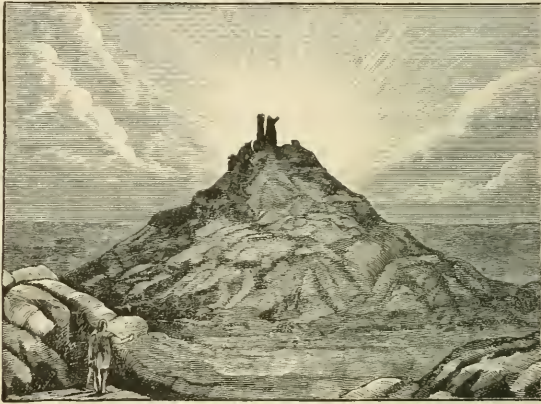
Sacred architecture in the time of Nebuchadnezzar had changed but little from the early Chaldæan models; only the temples were now larger and more sumptuous in their embellishments, being made, in the language of the inscriptions, “to shine like the sun.”

The celebrated Temple of the Seven Spheres, which may serve as a representative of the later Babylonian temples, was located at Borsippa, a suburb of Babylon proper. This structure was a vast pyramid, 270 feet square at the base, and rising in seven successive stages, or platforms, to a height of 156 feet. Each of the stages was dedicated to one of the seven planets, or spheres. (The sun and moon were reckoned as planets.) Various means were adopted to give the platforms the conventional tints assigned to the different planetary bodies. Thus the stages sacred to the sun and moon were covered respectively with plates of gold and silver.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVIII. Art. I. p. 6.



The chapel, or shrine proper, surmounted the uppermost stage, and, as described by Herodotus, must have been sumptuous in the extreme. The tower, thus crowned by the sanctuary and zoned with all the planetary colors, with the gilded stages glistening, as the inscriptions declare, "like the sun," presented a



BIRS-NIMRUD.

(Ruin of the great Temple of the Seven Spheres, near Babylon.)

splendid and imposing appearance, that struck every beholder with astonishment and awe.

An inscribed cylinder discovered under the corner of one of the stages (the Babylonians always buried records beneath the corners of their public edifices) informs us that this temple was a restoration by Nebuchadnezzar of a very ancient one, which in his day had become, from "extreme old age," a heap of rubbish.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The translation of the inscription runs as follows: —

"And by his favor, also, I rebuilt the Temple of the Seven Spheres, which is the Tower of Borsippa, which a former king had built, and had raised it to the height of forty-two cubits, but had not completed its crown or summit. From extreme old age it had crumbled down. The water-courses

This edifice in its decay has left one of the grandest and most impressive ruins in all the East. The great mass of the crumbled stages is now deeply furrowed with ravines, worn by the rains of twenty centuries, and at a distance over the level desert appears like a mountain crowned with ruined walls.

**Palaces.** — The Babylonian palaces were so like those of the Assyrians, already described, that any detailed account of them here is unnecessary. They were built upon platforms, or enormous substructions, similar to those we have seen at Nineveh. One of the largest of these, called by the natives El-Kasr, which supported the Palace of Nebuchadnezzar, covers an area of over one hundred acres. Its height varies from sixty to ninety feet. Numerous excavations have been made in this mound by the natives, in search of bricks. For two thousand years Babylon has been an inexhaustible brick quarry. Selucia of the Greeks, Ctesiphon of the Parthians, Al-Maydan of the Persians, and Cufa and Bagdad of the caliphs, were all built of material mined from these ruins. All the modern towns and caravansaries of the neighboring regions are constructed chiefly of brick dug out of the ruined edifices of the old capital. The Arab brick-merchants of the country, at the present day, engage as a regular business in the work of quarrying material from the old mounds and walls.

which once drained it had been entirely neglected. From their own weight its bricks had fallen down; the finer slabs which cased the brick-work were all split and rent, and the bricks which had formed its mound lay scattered in ruins.

“Then the Great Lord Marduk moved my heart to complete this temple; for its site or foundation had not been disturbed, and its timibel, or sacred foundation-stone, had not been destroyed.

“In the month Shalmi, on a festival-day, I replaced and renewed both the bricks of its mound and the finer slabs of its . . . Then I firmly fixed up its mikitta, and I placed upon its new crown the sculptured inscriptions of my name. For its summit and its upper story I made . . . like the old ones. I rebuilt entirely this upper portion, and I made its crown or summit as it had been planned in former days.” — *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVIII. Art. II.

**The Hanging Gardens.** — This structure excited the greatest admiration of the ancient Greek visitors to Babylon. It was constructed by Nebuchadnezzar, to please his wife Amytis, who, tired of the monotony of the Babylonian plains, longed for the mountain scenery of her native Media. The edifice was probably built somewhat in the form of the tower-temples, stages being erected one upon another, so as to form a vast pyramidal structure. The successive terraces, which overhung the city at a great height, were covered with earth, and beautified with rare plants and trees, so as to simulate the appearance of a mountain rising in cultivated terraces towards the sky. The gardens were irrigated by means of curious hydraulic devices, which elevated and distributed over the terraces water drawn from the Euphrates.<sup>1</sup>

**The Walls of Babylon.** — Under the later kings, Babylon was surrounded with walls of vast circuit and of great strength. Herodotus affirms that these defences enclosed an area just fourteen miles square. An inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, recently discovered, exactly confirms the statement of the historian.

The space enclosed by the ramparts must not be regarded as a city, but rather as a fortified district. The walls possibly embraced several cities, including Babylon proper and Borsippa. We may compare these ramparts to the celebrated Long Walls by means of which Athens was united with her seaports. The object in enclosing such an enormous district seems to have been to bring sufficient tillable ground within the defences to support the inhabitants in case of a protracted siege. No certain traces of these outer ramparts can now be found;<sup>2</sup> but close alongside the Eu-

<sup>1</sup> Recent excavations (1880-81) made by Hormuzd Rassam amid the ruins of Babylon have resulted in important and interesting discoveries. At what is called the Babel mound, one of the largest and most imposing upon the ancient site, the explorer has brought to light ruined hydraulic works of great extent, reservoirs, and stone-lined aqueducts evidently designed for bringing water from the Euphrates. These discoveries seem to point out the great Babel mound as the remains of the celebrated Gardens of Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus says the walls were eighty-five feet thick and three hundred and twenty-five feet high. Strabo gives thirty-two feet for the thickness, and

phrates, where lie the vast heaps of which we have spoken (save the Borsippa ruin), are vast crumbled ramparts, seven miles in circuit, and similar in every respect to those of old Nineveh. This doubtless was the royal quarter of the capital, or Babylon proper.

seventy-three feet for the height. There was an inner wall, very inferior to the great outer wall, and enclosing only about one-half of the area embraced by the latter. (Neither of these must be confused with the wall that surrounded the royal city, or Babylon proper.)

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF CHALDEAN, ASSYRIAN, AND  
BABYLONIAN DYNASTIES AND KINGS.

(Based on the Authority of Sayce and Rawlinson.)

	Dynasties or Periods.	Kings.	B.C.
Chaldean.	From 4300? to about 1300 B.C. Order of dynasties unsettled. Country, much of the time, divided into many petty states, with priest-kings ruling contemporaneously in the great cities of Agadê, Erech, Ur, Babylon, etc.	Accadians (Turadians) settled in Chaldæa . . . . .	before 4000?
		Arrival of the Semites . . . . .	4000?
		Sargon I. (Sarruki), Semitic king of Agadê . . . . .	3800?
		Naram-Sin (son), according to inscription of Nabonadius . . . . .	3750
		Ur-êa (Ur-Bagas), formerly read Uruk, Accadian king, capital at Ur . . . . .	2800?
		Kudur-Nakhunta, Elamite prince, conquers Chaldæa . . . . .	2286
		Kudur-Lagamer (Chedorlaomer), contemporary with Abraham . . . . .	about 2000
		Chaldæa conquered by Assyrian king Tiglath-Nin (= Tiglath-Adar) . . . . .	about 1300
		Tiglath-Nin, conqueror of Chaldæa . . . . .	about 1300-1280
		* * * * *	* * * * *
Assyrian.	First Empire. (1300-745 B.C.)	Tiglath-Pileser I. . . . .	about 1130-1110
		* * * * *	* * * * *
	Second Empire. (745-606 B.C.)	Asshur-izer-pal . . . . .	883-858
		Shalmaneser II. . . . .	858-823
		* * * * *	* * * * *
		Tiglath-Pileser II. . . . .	745-727
		Shalmaneser IV. . . . .	727-722
		Sargon . . . . .	722-705
		Sennacherib . . . . .	705-681
		Esarhaddon I. . . . .	680-668
Asshur-bani-pal (Sardanapalus) . . . . .	668-626		
* * * * *	* * * * *		
Babylonian.	First Period. (1300-625 B.C.)	Esarhaddon II. (Saracus) . . . . .	?-606
		Babylon ruled, for the most part, by Assyrian viceroys . . . . .	1300-747
	Second Period. (625-538 B.C.)	Re-establishes her independence under Nabonassar . . . . .	747
		Merodach-Baladan . . . . .	721-709
		Assyrian Sargon reconquers Babylon . . . . .	709
		Successive revolts and their suppression . . . . .	709-626
		Babylon becomes independent . . . . .	625
		Nabopolassar . . . . .	625-604
		Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	604-561
		Evil-Merodach . . . . .	561-559
Neriglissar . . . . .	559-556		
Labossoracus . . . . .	556-555		
Nabonadius . . . . .	555-538		
Belshazzar, his son (shares the government with his father).			

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE HEBREW NATION.

**Importance of Hebrew History.** — The history of no other people in so eminent a degree as that of the Hebrew nation illustrates the fact — a fact which we must in our study keep steadily in view — that the germ of all that is best in our modern civilization is to be sought among the institutions of antiquity. The nations already passed in review enriched the world by their labors and discoveries in the arts and sciences. The Hebrews did nothing in these matters. Their mission was a grander one — to teach righteousness. Of all the elements of the rich legacy bequeathed to the modern by the ancient world, by far the most important, in their influence upon the course of events, were those transmitted to us by the ancient Hebrews.

**The Patriarchal Age.** — Hebrew story begins with the departure of Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, about 2000 B.C. (see p. 7).

The story of Abraham and his nephew Lot, of Isaac and his sons Jacob and Esau, and of the twelve sons of the patriarch Jacob, is told in the Hebrew Scriptures with a charm and simplicity that have made all these names the familiar possession of childhood.

During all the Patriarchal Age, the descendants of Abraham in Palestine felt themselves to be strangers and sojourners in a country not their own. Their life was the simple wandering one of the Bedouins of to-day, who each summer come up from the Mesopotamian region, and dot the valleys and plains of this same land with their tents and herds. In the times of the Hebrew patriarchs, this region seems to have been but sparsely settled, and these wanderers from beyond the Euphrates were permitted to



rove over the country about at will. Thus moving from place to place in search of pasturage for their flocks, they pitched their tents on almost every spot in Palestine.

**The Hebrews in Egypt** (from the 18th to the 13th century B.C.?).—An event of frequent occurrence in the East now gave an entirely new turn to Hebrew history. A long drought, and consequent failure of crops and pasturage in Palestine, forced the families of Israel to look to the more favored valley of the Nile for sustenance for themselves and their flocks. The way for their kind reception by the king of Egypt had been providentially prepared. Joseph, having been sold by his jealous brothers into slavery, had won, through the generosity of events and his personal ability, the favor of the Egyptian monarch, and had been advanced to the position of prime-minister of the empire. Through his regard for his trusted minister, the Pharaoh admitted the Hebrews to an audience, and assigned them lands for their families and flocks in the land of Goshen, a most fertile section of the Delta country, and one well adapted to their pastoral habits. Here the Hebrews increased rapidly in numbers, and soon became an important element in the Egyptian state.

A change in the ruling dynasty led to an entire reversal of the policy of the Egyptian sovereigns in their treatment of the Hebrews, as well as of the other Semitic peoples whom migratory movements had brought into the Delta from the neighboring regions of Asia. On account of their increasing number it was feared that in case of invasion or revolt they might join the enemies of the Egyptians. Such an apprehension was not by any means groundless, for the country had but just been delivered from those Asiatic intruders called the Shepherd Kings. For this reason a severe persecution was waged against them. They were treated like prisoners of war, and by unfeeling taskmasters forced to hard labor upon the various edifices of the Pharaohs. The persecution gradually assumed a religious character, and became more bitter; for the pure monotheism of the Hebrews and the debased animal-worship of the Egyptians were in direct antag-

onism. A long and severe contest arose between Moses and Aaron, the leaders of the Hebrews, and the priests and magicians of the Egyptians.

The contest was brought to an abrupt termination. A series of plagues and calamities, falling with terrible swiftness and fatal effect upon the country and its people, led the Pharaoh to yield to the demands of the Hebrews — to which were now joined the entreaties of his own afflicted people — and to suffer them to depart out of the country. Hastily mustering the different tribes, Moses led the vast multitude — there were 600,000 fighting men — towards the eastern frontier of Egypt.

**The Exodus** (about 1300 B.C.). — Although the Pharaoh, while under the fear produced by the wonderful and calamitous events of the preceding months, had consented to the departure of the Israelites, still no sooner did he see himself about to be deprived of this vast number of subjects and slaves than he repented of having granted the permission, and determined to detain them by force.

Gathering a large army of foot soldiers and chariots, he set out in hot pursuit of the fugitives, and overtook them just as they reached the shores of the Red Sea, near its head. Here his army was overwhelmed in the treacherous quicksands, and the fleeing multitude were delivered from what seemed certain destruction.

From this experience dates the birth of the Hebrew nation. The great deliverance touched the hearts of all with a common and intense enthusiasm. It colored the whole subsequent history of Israel, and is the key to very much that would otherwise be inexplicable in the story of this peculiar people. The convictions that were born out of that wonderful event were the source, and are the explanation, of much of the resolution and religious zeal exhibited in succeeding passages of the nation's history.

The forty years following this event were consumed by the Hebrews in weary wanderings up and down the Sinaitic peninsula. During this time the generation that came out of Egypt, and to whom clung all the instincts of their life of slavery, were replaced

by a new generation inured to the hardships of the desert, and thus by this discipline prepared for the conquest of the land of Palestine, for which work their fathers had shown themselves unfitted by shamefully recoiling from the attempt when Moses wished to lead them against the strongholds of the tribes that held the southern frontier of Philistia. Amidst the "terrific scenery" of the southern portion of the peninsula, they received the law which formed the basis of all their national institutions.

At last, with the long-intermitted march resumed, Moses led the tribes by a great detour to the eastern frontier of Palestine, thus avoiding the strongly garrisoned forts and cities of the south, and bringing the armies of Israel upon the comparatively unprotected flank of the country. From the mountains of Moab, which overhang the valley of the Jordan, the great leader and prophet of Israel was privileged, from some commanding height, to cast his eyes over the land promised unto his fathers. Here, in sight of the longed-for country, he died amidst the mountains of Moab ; but "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

**Conquest of Canaan and Apportionment of the Land.** — Joshua, the successor of Moses, led the people across the Jordan ; and, after the capture of Jericho, a walled city situated in the river plain just above the head of the Dead Sea, proceeded to the work of subjugating the different tribes of the hill country of Palestine. Two campaigns, one conducted towards the south and the other towards the north, placed the larger part of the land in the possession of the Hebrews.

The conquered territory was now apportioned among the different tribes, the two tribes of Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh being permitted to settle upon land to the east of the Jordan, the inviting nature of which had struck them while marching through that region.

Thus, after one of the most remarkable migratory movements of which any annals have been preserved, the tribes of Israel were brought again, as permanent settlers, to the land over which, five hundred years before, their ancestors had roved, with their flocks and tents, as strangers and as pilgrims.

**The Judges** (from 1300 to 1095 B.C.?).—A long period of anarchy and dissension followed the conquest and allotment of the land. “There was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” During this time there arose a line of national heroes, such as Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, whose deeds of valor and daring, and the timely deliverance they wrought for the tribes of Israel from their foes, caused their names to be handed down with grateful remembrance to following ages.

These popular leaders were called Judges because they usually exercised judicial functions, acting as arbiters between the different tribes, as well as between man and man.

Prominent among the Judges was the heroine Deborah, who was a poet and prophet as well as judge. This wonderful person brings to our mind Joan of Arc in French history; and the parallel will aid us in comprehending the character and mission of the Hebrew heroine. Her influence seems to have been almost unbounded. The overthrow and death of Sisera, one of Israel's enemies, is celebrated by Deborah in a wild, exultant song that ranks among the most remarkable of the martial poems of the barbarous age of any people.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the close of the dark, confused, and transitional period of the Judges is placed Samson, the most renowned, in some respects, of the heroes of Israel. With his feats of strength and adventurous exploits, every one is familiar. They are narrated in the Book of Judges, which is a collection of the fragmentary, yet always interesting, traditions of this early and heroic period of the nation's life. The last of the Judges was Samuel, whose life embraces the close of the anarchical age and the beginning of the monarchy.

**Founding of the Hebrew Monarchy** (1095 B.C.?).—During the period of the Judges, the tribes of Israel were united by no central government. Their union was nothing more than a league, or confederation, which has been compared to the Saxon Hep-

<sup>1</sup> See Judges v.

tarchy in England. But the common dangers to which they were exposed from the attacks of the half-subdued Canaanitish tribes about them, and the example of the great kingdoms of Egypt and Assyria, led the people to begin to think of the advantages of a closer union and a stronger government. Consequently the republic, or confederation, was changed into a kingdom, and Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, a man chosen chiefly because of his commanding stature and royal aspect, was made king of the new monarchy (about 1095 B.C.).

The king was successful in subduing the enemies of the Hebrews, and consolidated the tribes and settled the affairs of the new state. But towards the close of his reign, his reason became disturbed: fits of gloom and despondency passed into actual insanity, which clouded the closing years of his life. At last he and his three sons fell in battle with the Philistines upon Mount Gilboa (about 1055 B.C.).

**The Reign of David** (1055-1015 B.C.?). — Upon the death of Saul, David, son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, who had been previously anointed and encouraged to expect the crown by the high-priest Samuel, assumed the sceptre. After crushing the attempt made by the surviving son of Saul (Ishbosheth) to secure the throne of his father, and reducing to allegiance all the tribes, David set about enlarging and strengthening his dominions.

There were yet many Canaanitish strongholds in the land, the defenders of which the Israelites had been unable to dislodge. In the midst of the district allotted to the tribe of Judah was the strong fortress of Jebus, possessed by the Jebusites. David succeeded in capturing this place by stratagem, and, under the name of Jerusalem, made it his capital city. This warlike king transformed the pastoral and half-civilized tribes into a conquering people, and, in imitation of the monarchs of the Nile and the Euphrates, extended the limits of his empire in every direction, and waged wars of extermination against the troublesome tribes of Moab and Edom.

Poet as well as warrior, David enriched the literature of his own

nation and of the world with lyric songs that breathe such a spirit of devotion and trust that they have been ever since his day the source of comfort and inspiration to thousands.<sup>1</sup> He had in mind to build at Jerusalem a magnificent temple, and spent the latter years of his life in collecting material for this purpose. In dying, he left the crown to Solomon, his youngest son, his eldest, Absalom, having been slain in a revolt against his father, and the second, Adonijah, having been excluded from the succession for a similar crime.

**The Reign of Solomon** (1015-975 B.C.?).—Solomon did not possess his father's talent for military affairs, but was a liberal patron of architecture, commerce, and learning. He erected, with the utmost magnificence of adornment, the temple at Jerusalem, planned by his father David. King Hiram of Tyre, who was a close friend of the Hebrew monarch, aided him in this undertaking by supplying him with the celebrated cedar of Lebanon, and with Tyrian architects, the most skilled workmen at that time in the world. The dedication ceremonies upon the completion of the building were most imposing and impressive. Thenceforth this temple was the centre of the Jewish worship and of the national life.

For the purpose of extending his commerce, Solomon built fleets upon the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. The most remote regions of Asia and Africa were visited by his ships, and their rich and wonderful products made to contribute to the wealth and glory of his kingdom. To facilitate the overland trade with the valley of the Euphrates and the regions beyond, he built Tadmor (Palmyra), a sort of caravansary in the midst of the Syrian desert. As a great depot of the trade of the East, this desert city soon attained importance, and in later times, under Zenobia, became the rival of Rome.

Solomon maintained one of the most magnificent courts ever

<sup>1</sup> The authorship of the different psalms is a matter of debate, yet critics are very nearly agreed in ascribing the composition of at least a considerable number of them to David.



held by an Oriental sovereign. When the Queen of Sheba, attracted by the reports of his glory, came from Southern Arabia to visit the monarch, she exclaimed, "The half was not told me." He was the wisest king of the East. His proverbs are famous specimens of sententious wisdom. He was versed, too, in botany, being acquainted with plants and trees "from the hyssop upon the wall to the cedar of Lebanon."

But, wise as was Solomon in his words, his life was far from being either admirable or prudent. In conformity with Asiatic custom, he had many wives — seven hundred, we are told — of different nationalities and religions. Through their persuasion the old monarch himself fell into idolatry, which turned from him the affections of his best subjects, and prepared the way for the dissensions and wars that followed his death.

**The Division of the Kingdom** (975 B.C.?). — The reign of Solomon was brilliant, yet disastrous in the end to the Hebrew monarchy. In order to carry on his vast undertakings, he had laid most oppressive taxes upon his people. When Rehoboam, his son, succeeded to his father's place, the people entreated him to lighten the taxes that were making their very lives a burden. Influenced by young and unwise counsellors, he replied to the petition with haste and insolence: "My father," said he, "chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Immediately all the tribes, save Judah and Benjamin, rose in revolt, and succeeded in setting up, to the north of Jerusalem, a rival kingdom, with Jeroboam as its first king. This northern state, with Samaria as its capital, became known as the Kingdom of Israel; the southern, of which Jerusalem remained the capital, was called the Kingdom of Judah.

Thus was torn in twain the empire of David and Solomon. United, the tribes might have maintained an empire capable of offering successful resistance to the encroachments of the powerful and ambitious monarchs about them. But now the land becomes an easy prey to the spoiler. It is henceforth the pathway of the conquering armies of the Nile and the Euphrates. Between the

powerful monarchies of these regions, as between an upper and nether millstone, the little kingdoms are destined, one after the other, to be ground to pieces.

**The Kingdom of Israel** (975?–722 B.C.). — The kingdom of the Ten Tribes maintained an existence for about two hundred and fifty years. Its story is instructive and sad. Many passages of its history are recitals of the struggles between the pure worship of Jehovah and the idolatrous service of the deities introduced from the surrounding nations. During the reign of Ahab and his infamous queen Jezebel, the quarrel between the two religious parties issued in bitter persecutions and massacres. The cause of the religion of Jehovah, as the tribes of Israel had received it from the patriarch Abraham and the lawgiver Moses, was boldly espoused and upheld by a line of the most remarkable teachers and prophets produced by the Hebrew race, among whom Elijah and Elisha stand pre-eminent. With undaunted courage and unswerving loyalty to the divine monitions, they condemned the idolatry and corruption of the times, and labored to lead the people back to the earlier and purer faith of their fathers.

But all was in vain; and at last the thoroughly corrupt and enfeebled nation falls into the power of the Assyrian monarch. This happened 722 B.C., when Samaria, as we have already narrated in the history of Assyria, was captured by Sargon, king of Nineveh, and the Ten Tribes were carried away into captivity beyond the Euphrates (see p. 79). From this time they are quite lost to history.

The country, left nearly vacant by this wholesale deportation of its inhabitants, was filled with other subjects or captives of the Assyrian king. The descendants of these, mingled with the few Jews of the poorer class that were still left in the country, formed the Samaritans of the time of Christ.

**The Kingdom of Judah** (975?–586 B.C.). — This little kingdom, torn by internal religious dissensions, as was its rival kingdom of the north, and often on the very verge of ruin from Egyptian or Assyrian armies, maintained an independent existence for about

four centuries. During this period, a line of eighteen kings, of most diverse characters, sat upon the throne. Upon the extension of the power of Babylon to the west, Jerusalem was forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Babylonian kings.

The kingdom at last shared the fate of its northern rival. Nebuchadnezzar, the powerful king of Babylon, in revenge for an uprising of the Jews, besieged and captured Jerusalem, and carried away a large part of the people, and their king Zedekiah, into captivity at Babylon (see p. 98). This event occurred one hundred and thirty-six years after the leading of the Ten Tribes into captivity by the Assyrians. It virtually ended the separate and political life of the Hebrew race (586 B.C.). Henceforth Judah constituted simply a province of the empires — Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian, and Roman — which successively held sway over the regions of Western Asia, with, however, just one flicker of national life under the Maccabees, during a part of the two centuries just preceding the birth of Christ.

It only remains to mention those succeeding events which belong rather to the story of the Jews as a people than as a nation. Upon the capture of Babylon by the Persian king Cyrus (see p. 100), that monarch, who was kindly disposed towards the Jews that he there found captives, permitted them to return to Jerusalem and restore the temple. Jerusalem thus became again the centre of the old Hebrew worship, and, although shorn of national glory, continued to be the sacred centre of the ancient faith till the second generation after Christ. Then, in chastisement for repeated revolts, the city was laid in ruins by the Romans; while vast numbers of the inhabitants — some authorities say over one million — were slain, or perished by famine, and the remnant were driven into exile to different lands.

Thus, by a series of unparalleled calamities and persecutions, were the descendants of Abraham “sifted among all nations”; but to this day they cling with a strange devotion and loyalty to the simple faith of their fathers.

*Hebrew Religion and Literature.*

The ancient Hebrews made little or no contribution to science. They produced no new order of architecture. In sculpture they did nothing: their religion forbade their making "graven images." Their mission, as we have already said, was to teach religion. Here they have been the instructors of the world. Their literature is a religious one; for literature with them was simply a medium for the conveyance of religious instruction and the awakening of devotional feeling.

The Hebrew religion, a pure monotheism, the teachings of a long line of holy men — patriarchs, lawgivers, prophets, and priests — stretching from Abraham down to the fifth century B.C., is contained in the sacred books of the Old Testament Scriptures. In these ancient writings, patriarchal traditions, histories, dramas, poems, prophecies, and personal narratives blend in a wonderful mosaic, which pictures with vivid and grand effect the various migrations, the deliverances, the calamities — all the events and religious experiences in the checkered life of the Chosen People.

Out of this old exclusive, formal Hebrew religion, transformed and spiritualized by the Great Teacher who spake as never man spake, grew the Christian faith. Out of the Old Testament arose the New, which we should think of as a part of Hebrew literature; for although written in the Greek language, and long after the close of the political life of the Jewish nation, still it is essentially Hebrew in thought and doctrine, and the supplement and crown of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Besides the Sacred Scriptures, called collectively, by way of pre-eminence, the Bible (the Book), it remains to mention especially the Apocrypha, embracing a number of books that were composed after the decline of the prophetic spirit, and which show traces, as indeed do several of the later books of the Bible, of the influence of Persian and Greek thought. These books are generally regarded by the Jews and Protestants as uncanonical, but

in the main are considered by the Roman Catholics as possessing equal authority with the other books of the Bible.

Neither must we fail to mention the Talmud, a collection of Hebrew customs and traditions, with the comments thereupon of the rabbis, a work held by most Jews next in sacredness to the Holy Book ; the writings of Philo, an illustrious rabbi who lived at Alexandria just before the birth of Christ ; and the *Antiquities of the Jews* and the *Jewish Wars* by the historian Josephus, who lived and wrote about the time of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus ; that is, during the latter part of the first century after Christ.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF HEBREW KINGS.

The chronology of the period of the Judges is very uncertain. The era covers something like three centuries, embraced between the death of Joshua and the establishment of the Monarchy, about 1095 B.C. Some uncertainty also attaches to the chronology of the monarchy. The dates given below of the reigns of the kings, both of the united and the divided kingdom, save a few that have been checked by the readings of the monuments, must be regarded as only approximately correct.

KINGS OF THE UNITED MONARCHY.

	B.C.
Saul . . . . .	about 1095-1055
David . . . . .	" 1055-1015
Solomon . . . . .	" 1015-975

DIVISION OF MONARCHY, ABOUT 975 B.C.

KINGS OF ISRAEL.	B.C.	KINGS OF JUDAH.	B.C.
Jeroboam . . . . .	about 975-954	Rehoboam . . . . .	about 975-958
Nadab . . . . .	954-953	Abijam . . . . .	958-956
Baasha . . . . .	953-930	Asa . . . . .	956-916
Elah . . . . .	930-929	Jehoshaphat . . . . .	916-892
Zimri . . . . .	929	Jehoram . . . . .	892-885
Omri . . . . .	929-918	Ahaziah . . . . .	885-884
Ahab . . . . .	918-897	Athaliah . . . . .	884-878
Ahaziah . . . . .	897-896	Joash . . . . .	878-838
Jehoram . . . . .	896-884	Amaziah . . . . .	838-809
Jehu . . . . .	884-856	Azariah . . . . .	809-757
Jehoahaz . . . . .	856-839	Jotham . . . . .	757-742
Joash . . . . .	839-823	Ahaz . . . . .	742-726
Jeroboam II. . . . .	823-772	Hezekiah . . . . .	726-697
Zachariah . . . . .	772	Manasseh . . . . .	697-642
Shallum . . . . .	772	Amon . . . . .	642-640
Menahem . . . . .	772-762	Josiah . . . . .	640-609
Pekahiah . . . . .	762-760	Jehoahaz . . . . .	609
Pekah . . . . .	760-730	Jehoiakim . . . . .	609-598
Hoshea . . . . .	730-722	Jehoiachin . . . . .	598-597
Sargon captures Samaria . . . . .	722	Zedekiah . . . . .	597-586



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE PHŒNICIANS.

**The Country and its Products.** — Ancient Phœnicia embraced a little strip of broken sea-coast lying between the Mediterranean and the ranges of Mount Lebanon. One of the most noted productions of the country was the fine fir timber cut from the forests that crowned the lofty ranges of the Lebanon Mountains. The “cedar of Lebanon” holds a prominent place both in the history and the poetry of the East.

Another celebrated product of the country was the Tyrian purple, which was obtained from several varieties of the murex, a species of shell-fish, secured at first along the Phœnician coast, but later sought in distant waters, especially in the Grecian seas.

**The People.** — The Phœnicians were a Semitic people, and of close kin to most of the so-called Canaanitish tribes. In very remote times the ancestors of all these peoples dwelt in the regions bordering upon the Persian Gulf. From those seats they migrated westward, and came into Palestine some time before the arrival of Abraham from the same region; for we are told that when that patriarch led his flocks into Palestine, “the Canaanite was then in possession of the land.”

The larger part of the migratory bands appear to have settled in the country which afterwards became known as the Promised Land; but some of the tribes pressed on to the sea-coast, and took possession of the region called by the Greeks Phœnicia. Still other clans of the same race pushed southward into the Delta of the Nile, and there doubtless helped to form the basis of the power of the Shepherd Kings, of whom we have given an account in connection with the history of the Egyptians (see p. 22).

While the Hyksos were extending their authority over the old civilization of the Nile, the kindred tribes that had settled on the tract of sea-coast overlooked by Mount Lebanon were establishing fishing-stations, and laying the foundation of the first and foremost maritime power of the early world.

**Tyre and Sidon.** — The various Phœnician cities never coalesced to form a true nation. They simply constituted a sort of league, or confederacy, the petty states of which generally acknowledged the suzerainty of Tyre or Sidon, the two chief cities. The latter at first held the place of supremacy in the confederation, until that city was overthrown by the Philistines, about 1050 B.C. Upon that event, Tyre, a little to the south of Sidon, built partly upon the mainland and partly upon a “rock in the midst of the waves,” assumed the position of leadership among the Phœnician communities.

For more than seven centuries Tyre controlled, almost without dispute on the part of Sidon, the affairs of Phœnicia; and during this time the maritime enterprise and energy of her merchants spread the fame of the little island-capital throughout the world. She was queen and mistress of the Mediterranean. The kings of Tyre had but little of the ambition for territorial aggrandizement that characterized the monarchs of their times. So long as they controlled the commerce of the seas they were content. When Solomon offered King Hiram twenty cities and towns for aid rendered in building the temple, the Tyrian monarch chose instead oil, wheat, and other products of Palestine.

During all the last centuries of her existence, Phœnicia was, for the most part, tributary to one or another of the great monarchies about her. She acknowledged in turn the suzerainty of the Assyrian, the Egyptian, the Babylonian, the Persian, and the Macedonian kings. Alexander the Great, after a most memorable siege, captured the city of Tyre — which alone of all the Phœnician cities closed her gates against the conqueror — and reduced it to ruins (332 B.C.). She never recovered from this blow. The site of the once brilliant maritime capital is now “bare as the top of a rock,”

a place where the few fishermen that still frequent the spot spread their nets to dry.

**Phœnician Commerce; Sea-Routes.** — When we catch our first glimpse of the Mediterranean, about 1500 B.C., it is dotted with the sails of Phœnician navigators. It was natural that the people of the Phœnician coast should have been led to a seafaring life. The lofty mountains that back the little strip of shore seemed to shut them in from a career of conquest and to prohibit an extension of their land domains. At the same time, the Mediterranean in front invited them to maritime enterprise; while the forests of Lebanon in the rear offered timber in abundance for their ships. The Phœnicians, indeed, were the first navigators who pushed out boldly from the shore and made real sea voyages. They crossed the Mediterranean in every direction with their ships, distributing the manufactures of Asia among the different peoples of Southern Europe, that were now just rising out of the lowest stages of culture, and from those regions brought back articles in quest among the merchants of the East.

The longest voyages were made to procure tin, which was in great demand for the manufacture of articles in bronze. The nearest region where this metal was found was the Caucasus, on the eastern shore of the Euxine. The Phœnician sailors boldly threaded the *Ægean Archipelago*, passed through the Hellespont, braved the unknown terrors of the Black Sea, and from the land of Colchis brought back to the manufacturers of Asia the coveted article — more precious than the Golden Fleece of the Argonauts (see p. 164).

Towards the close of the 11th century B.C., the jealousy of the Pelasgic states of Greece and of the Archipelago, that were now growing into maritime power, closed the *Ægean Sea* against the Phœnician navigators. They then pushed out into the Western Mediterranean, and opened the tin-mines of the Iberian (Spanish) peninsula. When these began to fail, these bold sailors passed the Pillars of Hercules, faced the dangers of the Atlantic, and brought back from those distant seas the tin gathered in the mines of Britain.

**Phœnician Colonies.**—Along the different routes pursued by their ships, and upon the coasts visited by them, the Phœnicians established naval stations and trading-posts. Thus the islands and shores of the Mediterranean became studded with naval depots and establishments that in time grew into important centres of trade and civilization.

The stations first established by the Phœnicians were simply factories and stopping-places for their ships. They were not colonies in the sense that they were the new seats of a surplus population. But when the little home-land, growing rich and populous through its extended trade, became too strait for its inhabitants, then a true colonizing movement began.<sup>1</sup> Phœnician settlements were established in Lesbos, Rhodes, and other islands of the Ægean Sea, as well as in Greece itself. The shores of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica were fringed with Phœnician colonies; while the coast of North Africa was dotted with such great cities as Utica, Hippo, and Carthage. Colonies were even planted beyond the Pillars of Hercules, upon the Atlantic seaboard. The Phœnician settlement of Gades, upon the western coast of Spain, is still preserved in the modern Cadiz.

**Routes of Trade.**—From the mother city Tyre, and from all her important colonies and trading-posts, radiated long routes of land travel, by which articles were conveyed from the interior of the continents to the Mediterranean seaboard. Thus, amber was brought from the Baltic, through the forests of Germany, to the mouth of the river Padus (Po), in Italy. The tin of the British Isles was, at first, brought across Gaul to the outlets of the Rhone, and there loaded upon the Phœnician ships. The trade with India

<sup>1</sup> Some think that this movement received an additional impulse from the Hebrew invasion of Palestine. About the close of the 14th century, the children of Israel crossed the eastern frontier of that country, and almost at a blow destroyed thirty-five of the Canaanitish states. The inhabitants were either slaughtered or driven back towards the coast, where they crowded into the cities of their kinsmen, the Phœnicians. This influx of refugees from the hill country contributed, it is supposed, a new motive to the colonizing spirit.

was carried on by way of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, great caravans bearing the burdens from the ports at the heads of these seas across the Arabian and Syrian deserts to the warehouses of Tyre. Other routes led from Phœnicia across the Mesopotamian plains to Armenia, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, and thence on into the heart of Central Asia.

**Arts Disseminated by the Phœnicians.** — We have dwelt at some length upon the maritime and land routes of the Phœnician traders, because of the light which the facts we have detailed shed upon the distribution of certain arts, and the spread of civilization, among the early peoples of the Mediterranean area. We can scarcely overestimate the influence of Phœnician culture and enterprise upon the civilization of Europe. “Egypt and Assyria,” says Lenormant, “were the birthplace of material civilization; the Canaanites [Phœnicians] were its missionaries.” Most prominent of the arts which they introduced among all the nations with whom they traded was the art of alphabetical writing.

Before or during the rule of the Hyksos in Egypt, the Phœnician settlers in the Delta borrowed from the Egyptians twenty-two hieratic characters, which they passed on to their Asiatic kinsmen. These characters received new names, and became the Phœnician alphabet.

Now, almost all the true alphabets in use among different peoples are manifestly derived from the Phœnician. Lenormant classifies the various alphabets of the world into five great groups:<sup>1</sup> the *Semitic*, employed by the various Semitic nations of Western Asia; the *Græco-Italic*, used by the Greeks and Romans; the *Iberian*, employed in the Spanish Peninsula; the *Northern*, embracing the Runic alphabets in use among the early Teutonic tribes; and the *Indo-Homerite*, including various alphabets in use among nations scattered from Arabia to India.

These groups of alphabets correspond to the five great routes of maritime and land travel followed by the Phœnician traders. Wherever they went, they carried letters and the art of alpha-

<sup>1</sup> *History of the East*, Vol. II.

HEBREW	PHENICIAN	ANCIENT CREEK	LATER CREEK	ENGLISH	HEBREW OF COINS
א	𐤀	Α ΔΑΔ	Α Ἀ	A	𐤀
ב	𐤁	Β Ε	B	B	𐤁
ג	𐤂	Γ Δ Γ C	Γ	G	𐤂
ד	𐤃	Δ Δ Δ Ρ	Δ	D	𐤃
ה	𐤄	Ε Β Ε Β Ε	E Ε	E	
ו	𐤅	Ζ F		F	𐤅
ז	𐤆	Σ Z I	Z	Z	
ח	𐤇	Θ Η		H	𐤇
ט	𐤈	Θ ⊗ ⊕ ⊖ ⊚	Θ	Th	
י	𐤉	Ζ ζ †	I	I	𐤉
כ	𐤊	† Η K	K	K	𐤊
ל	𐤋	Λ √ Λ L	Λ	L	𐤋
מ	𐤌	Μ Ν Μ Μ	M	M	𐤌
נ	𐤍	Ν Η Ν Ν	N	N	𐤍
ס	𐤎	‡ †	Ξ	X	
פ	𐤏	⊙ ⊙ ⊖ ⊚	Ο	O	⊙ ⊖ ⊚
צ	𐤐	Γ Γ	Π	P	𐤐
ק	𐤑	ϙ		Q	𐤑
ר	𐤒	Ρ ρ Ρ Ρ Ρ	Ρ	R	𐤒
ש	𐤓	Μ Ν Μ Σ †	Σ C	S	𐤓
ת	𐤔	Τ †	T	T	𐤔
Ⓢ	𐤕	OMITTED NOT BEING IN CREEK		Ϝ	𐤕



betical writing as "one of their exports." The characters were modified by the different peoples who adopted them; yet, among all the different groups enumerated, it is easy to detect a family likeness, and to recognize in the Phœnician alphabet the mother of them all.

It is supposed that the ancestors of the nations of Northern Europe were, at the time they first met the Phœnicians, living in the vicinity of the Black Sea. There they received the alphabet, and carried it with them in their westward migration into Europe.

The characters used by the early Teutons are known as *runes*. The Romans received their alphabet from the Greeks, and the Teutons, giving up their runes when they gave up paganism, adopted the creed and alphabet of the Romans together. So our alphabet has come to us from Egypt through the Phœnicians first, then the Greeks, and lastly the Romans.

The introduction of letters among the different nations, vast as was the benefit which the gift conferred upon peoples just beginning to make advances in civilization, is only one of the many advantages which resulted to the early civilization of Europe from the commercial enterprise of the Phœnicians. It is probable that they first introduced among the semi-civilized tribes of that continent the use of bronze, which marks an epoch in their growing culture. Articles of Phœnician workmanship are found in the earliest tombs of the Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans; and in very many of the manufactures of these peoples may be traced the influence of Phœnician art.

**Great Enterprises aided by the Phœnicians.** — While scattering the germs of civilization and culture broadcast over the entire Mediterranean area, the enterprising Phœnicians were also lending aid to almost every great undertaking of antiquity.

King Hiram of Tyre furnished Solomon with artisans and skilled workmen, and with great rafts of timber from Lebanon, for building the splendid temple at Jerusalem. The Phœnicians also provided timber from their fine forests for the construction of the great palaces and temples of the Assyrians, the Babylonians,

and the Egyptians. They built for the Persian king Xerxes the Hellespontine bridges over which he marched his immense army into Greece. They furnished contingents of ships to the kings of Nineveh and Babylon for naval operations both upon the Mediterranean and the Persian and Arabian gulfs. Their fleets served as transports and convoys to the expeditions of the Persian monarchs aiming at conquest in Asia Minor or Europe. They formed, too, the naval branch of the armaments of the Pharaohs ; for the Egyptians hated the sea, and never had a native fleet. And it was Phœnician sailors that, under the orders of Pharaoh-Necho, circumnavigated Africa — an undertaking which, although attended perhaps with less advantages to the world, still is reckoned quite as remarkable, considering the remote age in which it was accomplished (604-601 B.C.), as the circumnavigation of the globe by the Portuguese navigator Magellan, more than two thousand years later.

## CHAPTER X.

## LYDIA.

**The Country and the People.** — Lydia was a country in the western part of Asia Minor. It was a land highly favored by nature. It embraced two rich river valleys, — the plains of the Hermus and the Cayster, — which from the mountains inland sloped gently to the island-dotted *Ægean*. The Pactolus, and other tributaries of the streams we have named, rolled down “golden sands,” while the mountains were rich in the precious metals. The coast region did not at first belong to Lydia; it was held by the Greeks, who had fringed it with cities. The capital of the country was Sardis, whose citadel was set on a lofty and precipitous rock.

The Lydians were a mixed people, formed, it is thought, by the mingling, in prehistoric times, of Aryan tribes that crossed the *Ægean* from Europe, with the original non-Aryan population of the country. The Lydian kings were always anxious to be regarded as Greeks, and they made many rich presents to the Grecian shrines.

**Gyges** (about 687–653 B.C.). — The first historical Lydian king was Gyges, the founder of the dynasty of the Mermnadæ. It seems probable that the state which he and his successors lifted into prominence, was a fragment of the great Hittite empire, which once extended from the Euphrates to the shores of the *Ægean*.

Under Gyges Lydia began to play a distinct and important part in history. He helped Psammetichus of Egypt to throw off the Assyrian yoke, and to make that country once more an independent kingdom. He also began attacks upon the Greek cities of the coast, which, continued by his successors, resulted in bringing them all into bondage to the Lydian crown. He was slain in bat-



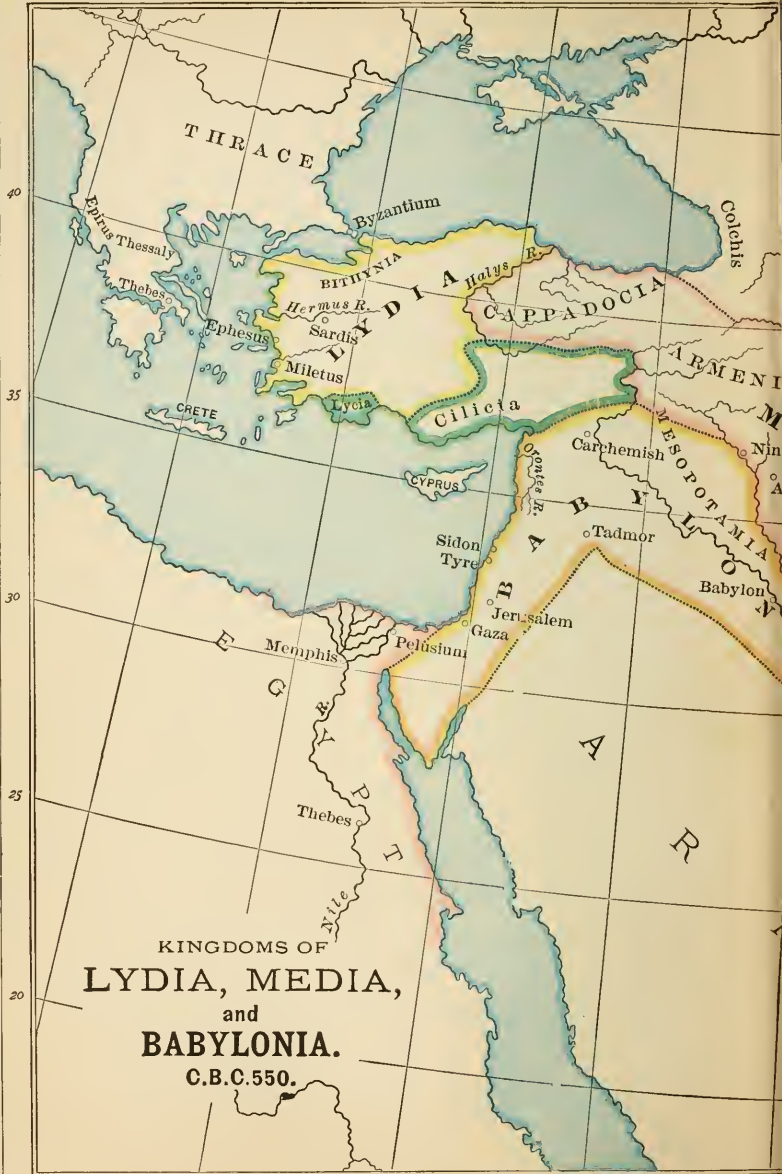
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KINGDOMS OF  
**LYDIA, MEDIA,**  
 and  
**BABYLONIA.**

C.B.C. 550.

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tle with the Cimmerians, a nomadic people, believed to have been of Celtic origin, who had burst upon Asia Minor from beyond the Caucasus, had sacked Sardis (save the citadel), and were spreading terror through the whole region, in some such way as their kinsmen, the Gauls, two or three centuries later, sacked Rome, and ravaged Italy from end to end.

**Alyattes III.** (about 603-554 B.C.). — The ravages of the Cimmerians checked for a time the rising fortunes of Lydia. But King Alyattes, the third in succession from Gyges, drove these barbarians quite or entirely out of Asia Minor, gaining thereby a wide reputation among the surrounding states, and thus laying the foundation of a great Lydian empire. He also extended the frontiers of Lydia towards the sea, by capturing the important Greek city of Smyrna.

But his chief war was with the Median king, Cyaxares, the conqueror, it will be recalled, of the Assyrian capital Nineveh. The destruction of the great Assyrian empire had resulted in the speedy extension of the western frontier of the new Median power to the river Halys, in Asia Minor. The ambitious Cyaxares soon found a pretext for passing that stream, and, with the Babylonian king as his ally, attacked the Lydians and their confederates.

For six years the struggle was carried on with changing fortunes, when the war was brought to a happy end by a singular circumstance. In the midst of a great battle, the sun was suddenly eclipsed, which portent so impressed the superstitious combatants that they ceased fighting, laid aside their animosities, and entered into a true and firm alliance. The treaty of peace was not only bound by most solemn covenants, but was further cemented by the marriage of the daughter of the Lydian king to Astyages, the son of the Median monarch (probably 585 B.C.).

The peace thus strangely brought about between the chief Asiatic powers, lasted for the lifetime of a generation, so that Western Asia, which for centuries had hardly for a moment been unharassed by war, enjoyed a sort of Saturnian age. Egypt alone during this period made serious trouble, through her aggressive policy in Asia, and forced Babylon into conflict with her (see p. 31).

**Crœsus** (about 554-540 B.C.). — The long peace was at length broken by the rise of a new power, the Persian, which destroyed successively the three allied kingdoms of Media, Lydia, and Babylon, and upon their ruins established the first great world-empire. The story of the rise of this empire we shall tell in the following chapter. Here we will simply trace to its lamentable end the Lydian kingdom.

The last and most renowned of the Lydian kings was Crœsus, the son of Alyattes. Under him the Lydian empire attained its greatest extension. He subjected all the Greek cities of the coast, and thus gained control of the commerce of the Mediterranean as well as that of the Black Sea. He also extended his authority over all the states of Asia Minor west of the Halys, save Lycia. The tribute he collected from the Greek cities, and the revenues he derived from his gold mines, rendered him the richest monarch of his times, so that his name has passed into the proverb, "Rich as Crœsus." He made extravagantly magnificent presents of vessels of gold and silver to the Greek temples. No other personage in all antiquity seems to have so impressed the imagination of the Greeks, and they accordingly embellished the history of his reign with innumerable stories and fables, of which we shall in a moment have an illustration.

The marriage which was intended to strengthen the Lydian and Median alliance formed on the occasion of the eclipse, made Crœsus and Astyages, the present Median king, brothers. Now, just at this time, Cyrus, leader of the Persians, had overthrown Astyages, and set up a new kingdom upon the ruins of the Median power. Crœsus determined to avenge his brother. The Delphian oracle, to which he sent to learn the issue of a war upon Cyrus, told him that he "would destroy a great kingdom." Interpreting this favorably, he sent again to inquire whether the empire he should establish would prove permanent, and received this oracle: "Flee and tarry not when a mule<sup>1</sup> shall be king of the Medes."

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is to the (traditional) mixed Persian and Median descent of Cyrus.

Deeming the accession of a mule to the Persian throne altogether impossible, he inferred the oracle to mean that his empire should last forever.

Thus encouraged in his purpose, Crœsus made a league with Babylon, Egypt, and the Greek city of Sparta, and prepared to make war upon Persia. But he had miscalculated the strength and activity of his enemy. Cyrus marched across the Halys, defeated the Lydian army in the field, and after a short siege captured Sardis ; and Lydia became a province of the new Persian empire.

There is a story which tells how Cyrus had caused a pyre to be erected on which to burn Crœsus, but at the last moment was struck by hearing the unfortunate monarch repeatedly call the name of Solon. Seeking the meaning of this, he was told that Crœsus in his prosperous years was visited by the Greek sage Solon, who, in answer to the inquiry of Crœsus as to whether he did not deem him a happy man, replied, "Count no man happy until he is dead." Cyrus was so impressed with the story, that he released the captive king, and treated him with the greatest kindness.

This story is a pure creation of the Greek imagination, for Solon was not a contemporary of Crœsus. But it is an historical fact that Cyrus dealt generously with his unfortunate prisoner, and that Crœsus resided a long time at the Persian court.

This war between Crœsus and Cyrus derives a special importance from the fact that it brought the Persian empire into contact with the Greek cities of Asia, and thus led on directly to that memorable struggle between Greece and Persia known as the Græco-Persian War.

**Lydia a Connecting Link between the East and West.**— "Lydia is the link," writes Sayce, "that binds together the geography and history of Asia and Europe." The Lydians, as well as the Phœnicians, were the heirs of Egypt and Babylon ; and what they received, they passed on to Greece. It would be difficult to say whether, of all the primary elements of civilization which the western nations received from the East, they received most by

way of the sea, through Phœnicia, or overland, through Asia Minor.

The link that united the art and culture of Egypt and Babylon with that of Lydia, was the great Hittite empire, of which we have already spoken in connection with the Pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>1</sup> The dominion of the Hittite princes then extended over all the countries between the Euphrates and the shores of the Ægean, and throughout these regions they spread the civilization of Egypt and Babylon, from which countries, especially from the latter, the Hittites borrowed their culture. Thus the Hittite capital Carchemish, upon the Euphrates, was the first station of Babylonian art and culture in its westward march; Sardis, in Lydia, was its second station; and the Ionian Greek cities on the Lydian coast were its third and last station before it passed over to the European continent.

It is an indisputable fact that Greek art, literature, and philosophy arose in the Asiatic Greek cities. Why the first light of that wonderful civilization should have dawned among the Greek communities in Asia we can now understand, as well as appreciate the largeness of the debt which Greek culture owed to that of Egypt and Chaldæa. Some of the most characteristic forms of early Greek art, as revealed by sculptures exhumed on the site of the most ancient Greek cities, came from Babylon by the way of Lydia; while even the speculations of the Ionian sages were tinged by a philosophy derived from the same source through the same channel.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 25, 27.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE PERSIAN EMPIRE.

(From 558 to 330 B.C.)

**Kinship of the Medes and Persians.** — We have already spoken of the probable early home of the Aryan peoples, north of the Hindu Kush Mountains. It was in very remote times, that some tribes, separating themselves from the other members of the Aryan family, crossed the mountain ranges to the south, and sought new abodes on the plateau of Iran. They drove out or absorbed a people of Turanian race whom they found in possession of the land. The tribes that settled in the south became known as the Persians; while those that took possession of the mountain regions of the northwest were called Medes.

The Medes, through amalgamation with native non-Aryan tribes, became quite different from the Persians; but notwithstanding this the names of the two peoples have always been very closely associated, as in the familiar legend, "The law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not."

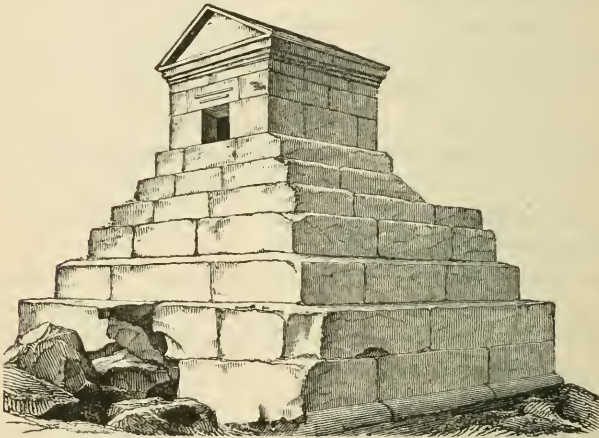
**The Medes at first the Leading Race.** — Although the Persians were destined to become the dominant tribe of all the Iranian Aryans, still the Medes were at first the leading people. Cyaxares (625-585 B.C.) was their first prominent leader and king. We have already seen how, aided by the Babylonians, he overthrew the last king of Nineveh, and burned that capital; and how, having extended his dominions to the Halys, in Asia Minor, he came into collision with the Lydian king, Alyattes, warred against him for six years, and then entered into a lasting alliance with him (see p. 129).

Cyaxares was followed by his son Astyages (585-558 B.C.),



during whose reign the Persians, whom Cyaxares had brought into at least partial subjection to the Median crown, revolted, overthrew the Median power, and thenceforth held the place of leadership and authority.

**Reign of Cyrus the Great (558–529 B.C.).** — The leader of the revolt against the Medes was Cyrus,<sup>1</sup> the tributary king of the Persians. Through his energy and soldierly genius, he soon built up an empire more extended than any over which the sceptre had yet been swayed by an Oriental monarch, or indeed, so far as we



TOMB OF CYRUS THE GREAT.

know, by any ruler before his time. It stretched from the Indus to the farthest limits of Asia Minor, and from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, thus embracing not only the territories of the

<sup>1</sup> Myths and fables have gathered thick about the name of Cyrus. Thus legend makes him to have been the grandson of Astyages, who, on account of warning dreams, sought the child's life; but the child was rescued and brought up by a herdsman, and in due time, of course, fulfilled the prophetic visions by supplanting his grandfather. Read Herodotus I. 107–130.

Median kingdom, but also those of the allied kingdoms of Lydia and Babylonia, the subjugation of which to the Persian authority has already been narrated (see pp. 99, 131).

Tradition says that Cyrus lost his life while leading an expedition against some Scythian tribes in the north. He was buried at Pasargadæ, the old Persian capital, and there his tomb stands to-day, surrounded by the ruins of the magnificent buildings with which he adorned that city.<sup>1</sup> The following cuneiform inscription may still be read upon a pillar near the sepulchre: "I am Cyrus, the king, the Akhæmenian."

**Character of Cyrus.** — Cyrus, notwithstanding his seeming love for war and conquest, possessed a kindly and generous disposition. Almost universal testimony has ascribed to him the purest and most beneficent character of any Eastern monarch.

He was, more than any other Oriental king, accessible to his subjects, and by his free and open way with them won their undying affection and loyalty. They were fond of calling him "Father." He refused to treat harshly those whom the fortunes of war threw into his power; and often he forgave and readmitted to favor those that had plotted against his life and crown. Many stories are told by the ancient writers which illustrate the energy of his actions, the alertness of his mind, and the goodness of his heart.

**Reign of Cambyses** (529–522 B.C.). — Cyrus the Great left two sons, Cambyses and Smerdis: the former, as the oldest, inherited the sceptre, and the title of king. He began a despotic and unfortunate reign by causing his brother, whose influence he feared, to be secretly put to death.

With far less ability than his father for their execution, Cambyses conceived even vaster projects of conquest and dominion. Asia had hitherto usually afforded a sufficient field for the ambition of Oriental despots. Cambyses determined to add the country of

<sup>1</sup> It should, perhaps, be said that Sayce thinks this structure cannot be the tomb of the great Cyrus; see his *Ancient Empires of the East*, p. 273. On the other hand, consult Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. III. p. 388.

Africa to the vast inheritance received from his father. Upon some slight pretext, he invaded Egypt, captured Memphis, and ascended the Nile to Thebes. From here he sent an army of fifty thousand men to subdue the oasis of Ammon, in the Libyan desert. Of the vast host not a man returned from the expedition. It is thought that the army was overwhelmed and buried by one of those fatal storms, called simooms, that so frequently sweep over those dreary wastes of sand.

Cambyses had meanwhile sent an embassy to the Ethiopians, a people of large and powerful frame, demanding their submission ; but he had received in reply a bow, with the message that when a Persian archer could bend it, then Cambyses might think of making war against the Ethiopians. The king immediately set his army in motion, to punish their insolence ; but the terrors of the Nubian desert, rather than the valor of the foe, caused him to turn back, with the object of the expedition very unsatisfactorily accomplished.

Irritated by the ill-success of his plans, and believing that the Egyptians, taking advantage of his misfortunes, were concerting a revolt, he began to treat them with great severity. Herodotus says that he vented his rage especially upon the priests, whom he caused to be scourged, and that he stabbed, with his own hand, the sacred bull Apis, and gave the flesh to the dogs ; but inscriptions recently brought to light, cast discredit upon this part of the historian's account, for they reveal the fact that the bull died a natural death, and was accorded the usual funeral honors by Cambyses.

Cambyses had set out on his return to Persia, when news was brought to him that his brother Smerdis had usurped the throne, and caused himself to be proclaimed king. A Magian impostor, Gomates by name, who resembled the murdered Smerdis, had personated him, and actually grasped the sceptre. Cambyses, already depressed in spirits by the small success attending his expedition, was entirely disheartened by this startling intelligence, and in despair took his own life.

**Reign of the Pseudo-Smerdis** (522-521 B.C.).—The circumstances of this reign are interesting on account of the insight they give us into the life of an Oriental monarch, and the light they throw upon religious matters.

There were at this time two opposing religions in Persia: Zoroastrianism, which taught the simple worship of God under the name of Ormazd; and Magianism, a less pure faith, whose professors were fire-worshippers.

The former was the religion of the Aryans; the latter, that of the non-Aryan portion of the population. The usurpation which placed Smerdis on the throne was planned by the Magi, Smerdis himself being a fire-priest. Of course the people were kept in profound ignorance of the real character of the new king, and they believed that they had for a monarch the true son of the Great Cyrus. For seven months Smerdis succeeded in concealing the fraud from the nation at large. He took every precaution to prevent the facts from becoming known. The wives of his harem, many of whom must have known the real Smerdis, were kept apart in different chambers, and no one was allowed to see them. Smerdis himself kept close within the walls of his palace, and admitted no one to an audience that had known the murdered prince.

But all was in vain. The very precautions that Smerdis took awakened suspicion, and at last the fraud was discovered. Several nobles, indignant at the deception that had been practised, forced their way to the presence of Smerdis, and the false king paid for his short-lived authority and royal honors with his life.

**Reign of Darius I.** (521-486 B.C.).—The leader of the nobles who rescued the sceptre from the grasp of the false Smerdis was Darius, son of Hystaspes. We are left in no doubt respecting his descent and titles, for on his tomb is this legend: "Darius, the Great King, the King of kings; the King of all inhabited countries; the King of the great earth, far and near; the son of Hystaspes, an Akhæmenian; a Persian, the son of a Persian; an Aryan, of Aryan descent."

The first act of Darius was to punish, by a general massacre,

the Magian priests for the part they had taken in the usurpation by Smerdis. The pure Zoroastrian worship was re-instated ; and the temples which had been destroyed by the Magians, or fire-worshippers, were restored. All the inscriptions of Darius evince great zeal for the restored religion, and breathe a spirit of pious dependence upon Ormazd.

For several years the monarch was busy suppressing revolts in almost every province of his wide dominions. In all the ancient Oriental despotisms, disaffections and uprisings were almost always the accompaniment of dynastic changes. A sovereignty acquired by the sword must be maintained by the same means.



CAPTIVE INSURGENTS BROUGHT BEFORE DARIUS. Beneath his foot is the Magus Gomates, the false Smerdis. (From the great Behistun Rock.)

With quiet and submission secured throughout the empire, Darius gave himself, for a time, to the arts of peace. He built a palace at Susa, and erected magnificent structures at Persepolis ; reformed the administration of the government (see p. 144), making such wise and lasting changes that he has been called “the



second founder of the Persian empire"; established post-roads, centering in Susa, instituted a coinage for the realm, and upon the great rock of Behistun, a lofty smooth-faced cliff on the western frontier of Persia, caused to be inscribed a record of all his achievements.<sup>1</sup>

And now the Great King, Lord of Western Asia and of Egypt, conceived and entered upon the execution of vast designs of conquest, the far-reaching effects of which were destined to live long after he had passed away. Inhospitable steppes on the north, and burning deserts on the south, whose shifting sands within a period yet fresh in memory had been the grave of a Persian army, seemed to be the barriers which Nature herself had set for the limits of empire in these directions. But on the eastern flank of the kingdom the rich and crowded plains of India invited the conqueror with promises of endless spoils and revenues; while on the west a new continent, full of unknown mysteries, presented virgin fields never yet traversed by the army of an Eastern despot.

Darius determined to extend the frontiers of his empire in both these directions. He first despatched, according to credible accounts, two naval expeditions of observation — one to seek information respecting the Indus country, and the other to make such investigations of the western seas and Grecian states as might be needful to his plans.

At one blow the region of northwestern India known as the Punjab, was brought under Persian authority; and thus with a single effort were the eastern limits of the empire pushed out so as to include one of the richest countries of Asia — one which henceforth returned to the Great King an annual revenue vastly larger than that of any other province hitherto acquired, not even excepting the rich district of Babylonia.

With an army numbering, it is said, more than 700,000 men,

<sup>1</sup> This important inscription is written in the cuneiform characters, and in three languages, Aryan, Turanian, and Semitic. It is the Rosetta Stone of the cuneiform writings, the key to their treasures having been obtained from its parallel columns.



Darius now crossed the Bosphorus by means of a sort of pontoon bridge, constructed by Grecian architects, and passing the Danube by means of a similar bridge, penetrated far into what is now Russia, which was then occupied by Scythian hordes. Adopting the same tactics employed by the Russians two thousand years later, when Napoleon led an army of nearly equal strength into the same country, the natives retreated as the Persians advanced, refusing battle, filling the wells, and destroying everything that might be of service to the enemy. After a short campaign of two months, Darius retreated from the country, effecting the movement, however, without those terrible losses and experiences which have made the later expedition the gloomiest episode of modern history.

The results of the expedition were the addition of Thrace to the Persian empire, and the making of Macedonia a tributary kingdom. Thus the Persian kings secured their first foothold upon the European continent.

The most significant campaign in Europe was yet to follow. In 500 B.C., the Ionian cities in Asia Minor subject to the Persian authority revolted. Miletus was the foremost city concerned in the rebellion. Athens, and Eretria on the island of Eubœa, lent aid to their sister states. Sardis was sacked and burned by the insurgents.

With the revolt crushed and punished with great severity, and with his power re-established to the Hellespont, Darius determined to chastise the European Greeks, and particularly the Athenians, for their insolence in giving aid to his rebellious subjects. Herodotus tells us that he appointed a person whose sole duty it was daily to stir up the purpose of the king with the words, "Master, remember the Athenians."

A large land and naval armament was fitted out and placed under the command of Mardonius, son-in-law of Darius. The land forces suffered severe losses at the hands of the barbarians of Thrace, and the fleet was wrecked by a violent storm off Mount Athos, three hundred ships being lost (492 B.C.).

Two years after this disaster, another expedition, consisting of 120,000 men, under the command of Datis and Artaphernes, was borne by ships across the Ægean to the plains of Marathon. The details of the significant encounter that there took place between the Persians and the Athenians will be given when we come to narrate the history of Greece. We need now simply note the result,—the complete overthrow of the Persian forces by the Greeks under Miltiades (490 B.C.).

Darius, angered beyond measure by the failure of the expedition, stirred up all the provinces of his vast empire, and called for new levies from far and near, resolved upon leading in person such an army into Greece that the insolent Athenians should be crushed at a single blow, and the tarnished glory of the Persian arms restored. In the midst of these preparations, with the Egyptians in revolt, the king suddenly died, in the year 486 B.C.

**Reign of Xerxes I.** (486–465 B.C.). — The successor of Darius, his son Xerxes, though more inclined to indulge in the ease and luxury of the palace than to subject himself to the hardship and discipline of the camp, was urged by those about him to an active prosecution of the plans of his father.

After crushing the Egyptian revolt and another insurrection in Babylonia, the Great King was free to devote his attention to the distant Greeks. Mustering the contingents of the different provinces of his empire, Xerxes led his vast army, numbering, if we are to believe Herodotus (see p. 219), over 2,000,000 fighting men, besides an equal number of attendants, over the bridges he had caused to be thrown across the Hellespont, crushed the Spartan guards at the Pass of Thermopylæ, pushed on into Attica, and laid Athens in ruins. But there fortune forsook him. At the naval battle of Salamis, his fleet was cut to pieces by the Grecian ships; and the king, making a precipitate retreat back into Asia, hastened to his capital, Susa. Here, in the pleasures of the harem, he sought solace for his wounded pride and broken hopes. He at last fell a victim to palace intrigue, being slain in his own chamber, 465 B.C.

**The Decline of the Persian Empire.** — The power and supremacy of the Persian monarchy passed away with the reign of Xerxes. The story of the empire for the last one hundred and forty years of its existence is simply a repetition of the history of all conquering states. { Power acquired by conquest, and wealth gained by robbery, are certain, in the end, to corrupt and weaken the possessor. } The closing history of the Persian Empire is one long recital of shameful briberies, corruptions, court intrigues, and assassinations. As the hand that wielded the sceptre grew weaker, the more remote or more powerful provinces cast off their allegiance ; and the records of the kings of this era are dreary enumerations of the wars and campaigns undertaken to punish conspiracies or to crush open revolt. The rising power of the Grecian states in the West was also a constant peril and menace in that quarter.

This period of turbulence and anarchy is spanned by the reigns of eight kings. It was in the reign of Artaxerxes II., called Mnemon for his remarkable memory, that took place the well-known expedition of the Ten Thousand Greeks under Cyrus, the brother of Artaxerxes, an account of which will be given in connection with Grecian history.

**The Last of the Persian Kings.** — That mysterious allotment of Providence by which the consequences of the follies and crimes of a long line of ancestors fall upon an innocent descendant, is illustrated anew in the sad story of Darius III., the last of the Persian kings. He was comely in person, generous in disposition, and free from most of those faults which rendered the reigns of his predecessors infamous. Yet it was his misfortune to live to see the weakened empire fall to pieces in his hands, and to become himself a hunted fugitive in a remote province of his dominions.

The disclosures of the preceding reigns invited the Macedonians to the invasion and conquest of the empire. Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea had shown the immense superiority of the free soldiery of Greece over the splendid but servile armies of Persia, that were often driven to battle with the lash. The march of the Ten Thousand through the very heart of the dominions of the Great King

had demonstrated the amazing internal weakness of the empire. The condition of the Persian monarchy at this time was very like that of the Roman Empire just before its fall. A single blow will suffice to shatter the splendid fabric into ruins.

Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon, was the destined destroyer. In the year 334 B.C., that conqueror led a small army of thirty-five thousand Greeks across the Hellespont. The three great battles of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela decided the fate of the Persian Empire. Darius fled from the last field, on the plains of Assyria, only to be treacherously assassinated by one of his own generals, Bessus, satrap of Bactria. Alexander avenged his death, and caused his body to be buried with all the pompous ceremonial observed by the Persians.

The succeeding movements of Alexander, and the establishment by him of the short-lived Macedonian monarchy upon the ruins of the Persian state, are matters that properly belong to Grecian history, and will be related in a following chapter.

TABLE OF KINGS OF MEDIA AND PERSIA.

Kings of Media...	{	Phraortes . . . . .	? -625
		Cyaxares . . . . .	625-585
		Astyages . . . . .	585-558
Kings of Persia...	{	Cyrus . . . . .	558-529
		Cambyses . . . . .	529-522
		Pseudo-Smerdis . . . . .	522-521
		Darius I. . . . .	521-486
		Xerxes I. . . . .	486-465
		Artaxerxes I. (Longimanus) . . . . .	465-425
		Xerxes II. . . . .	425
		Sogdianus . . . . .	425-424
		Darius II. (Nothus) . . . . .	424-405
		Artaxerxes II. (Mnemon) . . . . .	405-359
		Artaxerxes III. (Ochus) . . . . .	359-338
		Arses . . . . .	338-336
Darius III. (Codomannus) . . . . .	336-330		

## CHAPTER XII.

INSTITUTIONS, RELIGION, AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE  
ANCIENT PERSIANS.

**The Persian Government.** — Before the reign of Darius I., the government of the Persian Empire was like that of all the great monarchies that had preceded it ; that is, it consisted of a great number of subject states, which were allowed to retain their own kings and manage their own affairs, only paying tribute and homage, and furnishing contingents in time of war, to the Great King.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen how weak was this rude and primitive type of government. Darius I., who possessed rare ability as an organizer, remodelled the system of his predecessors, and actually realized for the Persian monarchy what Tiglath-Pileser II. had long before attempted, with indifferent success, to accomplish for the Assyrian. "For the first time in history centralization became a political fact."

The system of government which Darius I. thus made a real fact in the world, — and which was reproduced, if not imitated, by the Romans, — is known as the *satrapal*, a form represented to-day by the government of the Turkish Sultan. The entire kingdom was divided into twenty or more provinces, over each of which was placed a governor, called a satrap, appointed by the king. These officials held their position at the pleasure of the sovereign, and were thus rendered his subservient creatures. Each province contributed to the income of the king a stated

<sup>1</sup> The ideas of the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser II., were, it must be remembered, only very partially realized; the Assyrian monarchy never became a thoroughly organized and centralized government.

revenue. After raising this, the governor was at liberty to collect as much more as he needed to sustain such a court and retinue as his tastes might dictate. These often being capricious and extravagant, the taxes were usually exorbitant and oppressive; but so long as the annual stipend was received at the capital, no inquiries were likely to be made. The measures of these satraps were often cruel and despotic: they held the power of life and death; and justice with them was too frequently a thing of price and purchase.

There were provisions in the system by which the king might be apprised of the disloyalty of his satraps. Thus the whole dominion was firmly cemented together, and the facility with which almost sovereign states—which was the real character of the different parts of the empire under the old system—could plan and execute revolt, was removed.

**Literature and Religion: Zoroastrianism.**—The literature of the ancient Persians was mostly religious. Their sacred book is called the Zendavesta. It is composed of eight parts, the oldest of which is named the Vendidad. This consists of laws, incantations, and mythical tales.

The religious system of the Persians, as taught in the Zendavesta, is known as Zoroastrianism, from Zoroaster, its founder. This great reformer and teacher is now generally supposed to have lived and taught about 1000 B.C.

Zoroastrianism seems to have been a revolt against polytheistic tendencies in the old Aryan religion. Zoroaster taught belief in a Supreme Being, called Ahura Mazda,<sup>1</sup> or Ormazd; and his precepts inculcated virtue and purity. His teachings produced a religious schism among the hitherto united Indo-Iranian peoples, which led to their final separation, and to the establishment of the antagonistic systems of Brahminism in Hindustan and Zoroastrianism in Persia.

**Dualism in the Persian Religion: Influence of Country.**—The system of Zoroaster was much modified by the nature of the

<sup>1</sup> Hence *Mazdeism*, the name sometimes given to the religion.



region that became the home of the Iranian peoples, and also by the sensuous worship of the Turanian tribes with which they came in contact.

Persia is a country of sharp contrasts : winters of bitter cold are followed closely by springs of surpassing freshness and beauty, and these are quickly succeeded by hot, withering summers. Frightful deserts alternate with fertile and lovely valleys. Good and evil powers seemed thus, to the observant minds of those early peoples, to be waging an ever-renewed conflict in the world around them. Within themselves, also, health and disease, vice and virtue, evil and good, appeared ever contending, each for the mastery.

Hence arose the system of belief known as dualism, the germs of which are traceable in the earliest Aryan hymns. The Persians imagined that over against the good Ormazd there was a "dark spirit," Ahriman (Angro-Mainyus), who was constantly striving to destroy the good creations of Ormazd by creating all evil powers — storm, drought, pestilence, noxious animals, weeds and thorns in the world without, and evil in the heart of man within. From all eternity these two powers had been contending for the mastery ; in the present neither had the decided advantage ; but in the near future Ormazd would triumph over Ahriman, and evil be forever destroyed.

The duty of man was to aid Ormazd by working with him against the evil-loving Ahriman. He must labor to eradicate every evil and vice in his own bosom ; to reclaim the earth from barrenness ; and to kill all bad animals — frogs, toads, snakes, lizards — which Ahriman had created. Herodotus saw with amazement the Magian priests armed with weapons and engaged in slaying these animals as a "pious pastime." Agriculture was a sacred calling, for the husbandman was reclaiming the ground from the curse of the Dark Spirit. Thus men might become co-workers with Ormazd in the mighty work of overthrowing and destroying the kingdom of the wicked Ahriman.

The evil man was he who allowed vice and degrading passions to find a place in his own soul, and neglected to exterminate nox-

ious animals and weeds, and to help redeem the earth from the barrenness and sterility created by the enemy of Ormazd.

After death the souls of the good and bad alike must pass over a narrow bridge: the good soul crosses in safety, and is admitted to the presence of Ahura Mazda; while the evil soul is sure to fall from the path, sharp as the edge of a scimitar, into a pit of woe, the dwelling-place of Ahriman.

**Zoroastrianism Influenced by Magianism.** — Zoroastrianism was also deeply influenced by the religion of the ancient people with which the Aryans blended, especially in the Median provinces. There, among the mountains of the Zagros region, flourished a sort of sensuous nature-worship, called Magianism, in which the elements — fire, air, earth, and water — were esteemed sacred and were made objects of worship.<sup>1</sup> Fire was regarded with special veneration, as the purest symbol of the Supreme Being. This religion was really but a modified form of the Sabæism of the early Chaldæans. The lofty summits of the mountains were crowned with altars, upon which the Magian fires burned continually from generation to generation. The system possessed a venerable priesthood, and a ceremonial of worship that appealed to the grosser senses.

Zoroastrianism, too refined and spiritual to maintain its hold upon a semi-barbarous people, naturally became corrupted by the sensuous worship of the Magians, just as the Hebrew religion became corrupted by the idolatries of the Canaanites. The two religions blended; yet the faith of the conquering Aryans ever

<sup>1</sup> After the Zoroastrians had added to their creed the Magian belief in the sacredness of the elements, — earth, water, fire, and air, — there arose a difficulty in regard to the disposal of dead bodies. They could neither be burned, buried, thrown into the water, or left to decay in a sepulchral chamber or in the open air without polluting one or another of the sacred elements. So they were given to the birds and wild beasts, being exposed on lofty towers or in desert places. Those whose feelings would not allow them thus to dispose of their dead, were permitted to bury them, provided they first encased the body in wax to preserve the ground from contamination. The modern Parsees, or Fire-worshippers, give their dead bodies to the birds.

retained the most prominent place in the new worship. The form was Magian, but its spirit was Zoroastrian. It never became a really idolatrous worship, and was, in all its stages, the purest and most spiritual religion held by any people of antiquity, save that professed by the ancient Hebrews.

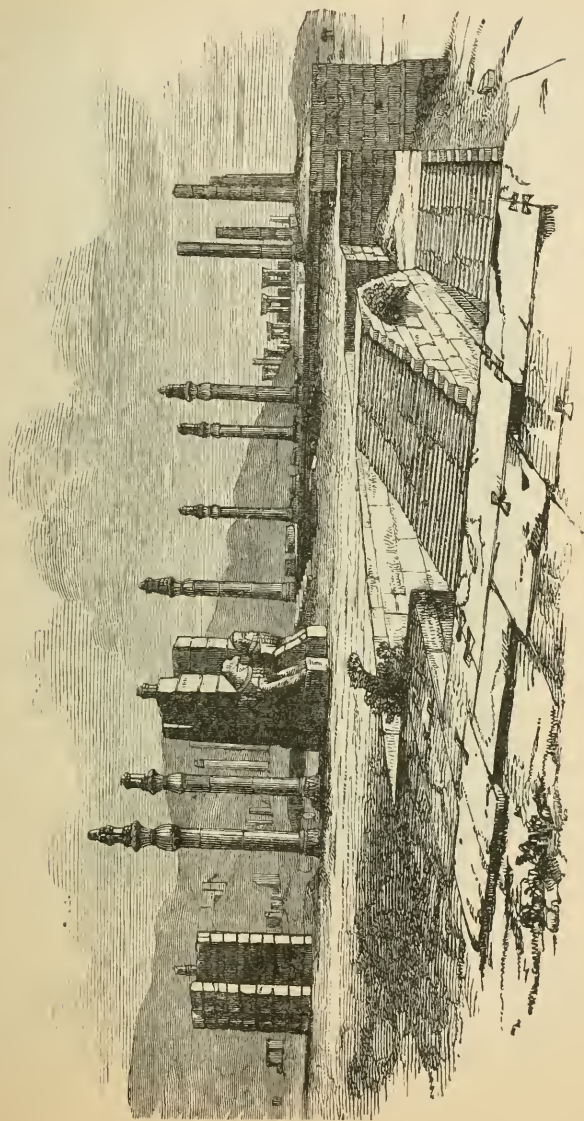
Between the Persians and the Hebrews, indeed, there existed a bond of sympathy in their religious faith. Cyrus restored the captive Jews to Jerusalem and aided them in the restoration of their temple, in which, as in the case of the Persian sanctuary, appeared no statue of the object of worship. Xerxes burned the temples of the Greeks, an act prompted by that same hatred of idolatry, and by that same zeal for the spiritual worship of the Eternal Unseen, that led the Israelites to overturn the altars, cut down the groves, and slay the priests of the idolatrous Canaanites.

**Persian Architecture.** — The ancient Persians did little or nothing in science and philosophy, but in architecture they originated an order superior to any that the nations which preceded them had produced. But notwithstanding that Persian structural art was home-born, it was greatly influenced and modified by both that of Assyria and of Egypt.

The simple religious faith of the Persians discouraged (though it did not prohibit) the erection of temples: their sacred architecture scarcely included more than an altar and its pedestal. The palace of the monarch was the structure that absorbed the best efforts of the Persian artist.

The first steps in royal architecture were taken by the Medes, who, living in a mountainous and woody country, built wooden structures for their palaces. In such edifices, the column, formed of a tree-trunk, was naturally a prominent feature. When the Persians gained supremacy in the state, they borrowed the architecture of the Medes; but, living in a country where wood was scarce and stone abundant, they reproduced the wooden residences of the Median kings in the latter material.

In imitation of the inhabitants of the valley of the Euphrates, they raised the royal residence on a lofty terrace, or platform.



THE RUINS OF PERSEPOLIS.

Here again they transformed the mud-built palace-mound of the Assyrians into stone, and at Persepolis raised, for the substruction of their palaces, an immense platform of massive masonry, which is one of the most wonderful monuments of the world's ancient builders. This terrace, which is uninjured by the 2300 years that



THE KING IN COMBAT WITH A MONSTER. (From Persepolis.)

have passed since its erection, is about 1500 feet long, 1000 feet wide, and 40 feet high. The summit is reached by broad stairways of stone, pronounced by Niebuhr and Fergusson the finest work of the kind that the ancient or even the modern world can boast.



**Remains of the Persian Palaces.** — Surmounting this platform are the ruins of the palaces of several of the Persian monarchs, from Cyrus the Great to Artaxerxes Ochus. These ruins consist chiefly of walls, and great monolithic door- and window-frames. The whole mass of buildings is supposed to have been burned by Alexander during a drunken frolic. Thirteen lofty columns, sixty feet in height, mark the site of the Hall of Xerxes — the audience chamber, or throne-room, of the Great King, beneath which he sat to hear and judge the matters of his subjects. Colossal winged bulls, copied from the Assyrians, stand as wardens at the gateway of the ruined palaces.

Numerous sculptures in bas-relief decorate the faces of the walls, and these throw much light upon the manners and customs of the ancient Persian kings. The successive palaces increase, not only in size, but in sumptuousness of adornment, thus registering those changes which we have been tracing in the national history. The residence of Cyrus was small and modest, while that of Artaxerxes Ochus equalled in size the great palace of the Assyrian Sargon.

Again, the sculptures that adorn the residences of the earlier kings, Cyrus and Darius, represent the monarch engaged in bold and manly combat with lions and other monsters; while in the halls and chambers of the palace of Xerxes these give place to representations of servants bearing articles of luxury intended for royal use. “A tone of mere sensual enjoyment is thus given to the later edifice which is far from characterizing the earlier; and the decline at the court, which history indicates as rapid about this period, is seen to have stamped itself, as such changes usually do, upon the national architecture.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. III. p. 295.



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SECTION II. — GREECE.

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CHAPTER I.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

**Divisions of Greece.** — Long arms of the sea divide the Grecian peninsula into three parts, called Northern, Central, and Southern Greece. The southern portion, joined to the mainland by the Isthmus of Corinth, and now generally known as the Morea, was called by the ancients the Peloponnesus; that is, the Island of Pelops, from its fabled colonizer.

Northern Greece included the ancient districts of Thessaly and Epirus. Thessaly consists mainly of a large and beautiful valley, walled in on all sides by rugged mountains. It was celebrated far and wide for the variety and beauty of its scenery. On its northern edge, between Olympus and Ossa, lay a beautiful glen, called the Vale of Tempe, the only pass by which the plain of Thessaly could be entered from the north. The district of Epirus stretched along the Ionian Sea on the west. In the gloomy recesses of its forests of oak was situated the renowned Dodonean oracle of Zeus.

Central Greece was divided into eleven districts. The most important of these were Acarnania, Ætolia, Phocis, Bœotia, and Attica. In Phocis was the city of Delphi, famous for its oracle and temple; in Bœotia, the city of Thebes; and in Attica was the brilliant Athens.

Southern Greece, or the Peloponnesus, was also divided into eleven provinces, of which the more important were Arcadia, embracing the central part of the peninsula; Achaia, the northern

part; Argolis, the eastern; and Messenia and Laconia, the southern. The last district was ruled by the city of Sparta, the great rival of Athens.

**Mountains.**—The Cambunian Mountains form a lofty wall along a considerable reach of the northern frontier of Greece, shutting out at once the cold winds and hostile races from the north. Branching off at right angles to these mountains is the Pindus range, which runs south into Central Greece.

In Northern Thessaly is Mount Olympus, the most celebrated mountain of the peninsula. The ancient Greeks thought it the highest mountain in the world (it is 9700 feet in height), and believed that its cloudy summit was the abode of the celestials.

South of Olympus, close by the sea, are Ossa and Pelion, celebrated in fable as the mountains which the giants, in their war against the gods, piled one upon another, in order to scale Olympus.

Parnassus and Helicon, in Central Greece,—beautiful mountains clad with trees and vines and filled with fountains,—were believed to be the favorite haunts of the Muses. Near Athens are Hymettus, praised for its honey, and Pentelicus, renowned for its marbles.

The Peloponnesus is rugged with mountains that radiate in all directions from the central country of Arcadia,—“the Switzerland of Greece.”

**Islands about Greece.**—Very much of the history of Greece is intertwined with the islands that lie about the mainland. On the east, in the Ægean Sea, are the Cyclades, so called because they form an irregular circle about the sacred isle of Delos, where was a very celebrated shrine of Apollo. Between the Cyclades and Asia Minor lie the Sporades, which islands, as the name implies, are sown irregularly over that portion of the Ægean.

Just off the coast of Attica is a large island called by the ancients Eubœa, but known to us as Negropont. Close to the Asian shores are the large islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, and Rhodes. Chios was widely known as being the home of the

alleged descendants of Homer, called the Homerides. Samos was the birthplace of some of the most distinguished artists and philosophers that the Greek race produced. Rhodes was noted for its schools of oratory and sculpture, and its commercial activity.

To the west of Greece lie the Ionian Islands, the largest of which was called Corcyra, now Corfu. The rugged island of Ithaca was the birthplace of Ulysses, the hero of the *Odyssey*. Cythera, just south of the Peloponnesus, was sacred to Aphrodite (Venus), as it was here fable said she rose from the sea-foam. Beyond Cythera, in the Mediterranean, midway between Greece and Egypt, is the large island of Crete, noted in legend for its Labyrinth and its legislator Minos.

**Other Lands peopled by the Greeks.** — Under the name of Hellas (see p. 155) the ancient Greeks included not only Greece proper and the islands of the adjoining seas, but also the Hellenic cities in Asia Minor, in Southern Italy, and in Sicily, besides many other Grecian colonies scattered up and down the Mediterranean and along the shores of the Propontis and of the Euxine. "Wherever were Hellenes there was Hellas."

In the Western Mediterranean the Greeks came in contact with a sea-going and colony-planting people like themselves, — the Phœnicians, — and hence in this quarter they were prevented from establishing their colonies as thickly as they otherwise would have done.

During the later periods of Greek dominance, many magnificent cities, filled with Greek citizens, and characterized by Hellenic manners, language, and religion, were sprinkled thickly over the different countries of Asia as far as the Indus.

**Influence of Country.** — The nature and position of a country, as we have already seen illustrated in the case of Phœnicia, have much to do with the moulding of the character and the shaping of the history of its people. Mountains, isolating neighboring communities and shutting out conquering races, foster the spirit of local patriotism and <sup>2</sup>preserve freedom; the sea, inviting abroad, and rendering intercourse with distant countries easy, awakens the spirit of <sup>3</sup>adventure and develops <sup>4</sup>commercial enterprise.

Now, Greece is at once a mountainous and a maritime country. Abrupt mountain-walls fence it off into a great number of isolated districts, each of which in ancient times became the seat of a distinct community, or state. Hence the fragmentary character of its political history. The Hellenic states never coalesced to form a single nation.

The peninsula is, moreover, by reason of deep arms and bays of the sea, converted into what is in effect an archipelago. (No spot in Greece is forty miles from the sea.) Hence its people were early tempted to a sea-faring life. The shores of the Mediterranean and the Euxine were dotted with Hellenic colonies. Intercourse with the old civilizations of Egypt and Phœnicia stirred the naturally quick and versatile Greek intellect to early and vigorous thought. The islands strewn with seeming carelessness through the Ægean Sea were "stepping-stones" which invited the earliest settlers of Greece to the delightful coast countries of Asia Minor, and thus blended the life and history of the opposite shores.

Again, the beauty of Grecian scenery inspired many of the most striking passages of her poets; and it is thought that the exhilarating atmosphere and brilliant skies of Attica were not unrelated to the lofty achievements of the Athenian intellect. Indeed, we may almost assert that the wonderful civilization of Greece was the product of a land of incomparable and varied beauties acting upon a people singularly sensitive to the influences of nature (see p. 159).

**The Pelasgians.** — The historic inhabitants of the land we have described were called by the Romans Greeks, but they called themselves Hellenes, from their fabled ancestor Hellen.

But the Hellenes, according to their own account, were not the original inhabitants of the country. They were preceded by a people whom they called Pelasgians. Who these folk were, or what was their relation to the later historic Greeks, is a matter of debate. Some think they were the Aryan pioneers in this part of Europe, and stood in some such relation to the Greeks as the Celts in Western Europe sustained to the Teutons. Others regard them

as being simply the prehistoric ancestors of the Hellenes, or of a part of the Hellenes, just as the Angles and Saxons were the progenitors of the English of to-day. Still others think that the Pelasgians and Hellenes were kindred tribes, but that the Hellenes, possessing superior qualities, gradually acquired ascendancy over the Pelasgians and finally absorbed them.

The Pelasgians, whoever they may have been, evidently were a people somewhat advanced beyond the savage state. They cultivated the ground, and protected their cities with walls. Remnants of their rude but massive masonry still encumber in places the soil of Greece. Their chief deity was the Dodonean Zeus, so called from his sanctuary of Dodona, in Epirus. He was essentially the same divinity as the Olympian Zeus of the Greeks.

**The Hellenes.** — The Hellenes were divided into four families, or tribes: namely, the Ionians, the Dorians, the Achæans, and the Æolians.

The Ionians were a many-sided, imaginative people, singularly open to the influences of the outer world. They developed every part of their nature, and attained unsurpassed excellence in art, literature, and philosophy. The most noted Ionian city was Athens, whose story is a large part of the history of Hellas.

The Dorians were a practical, unimaginative race. Their speech and their art were both alike without ornament. They developed the body rather than the mind. Their education was almost wholly gymnastic and military. They were unexcelled as warriors. The most important city founded by them was Sparta, the rival of Athens.

In the different aptitudes and contrasted tendencies of these two great Hellenic families, lay, in the words of the historian Ranke, "the fate of Greece." They divided Hellas into two rival parties, which through their jealousies and contentions finally brought to utter ruin all the political hopes and promises of the Hellenic race.

The Achæans are represented by the Greek legends as being the predominant race in the Peloponnesus during the Heroic Age.

They then overshadowed to such a degree all the other tribes as to cause their name to be frequently used for the Greeks in general.

The Æolians formed a rather ill-defined division. In historic times the name is often made to include all Hellenes not enumerated as Ionians or Dorians.

When the mists of antiquity are first lifted from Greece, about the beginning of the eighth century B.C., we discover the several families of the Hellenic race in possession of Greece proper, of the islands of the Ægean, and of the western coasts of Asia Minor. Respecting their prehistoric migrations and settlements, we have little or no certain knowledge. We do know, however, through the testimony of language, that they belonged to the great Aryan family; that their ancestors and those of the Romans, after they had separated from the other Aryan peoples, lived together a considerable time before they parted company; and finally, that after this separation all the ancestors of the several divisions, or tribes, of the Hellenes dwelt together for some time as a single community before they separated to form the different branches of the Hellenic family.

What region was the abode of the Hellenes while they still constituted an undivided family, we can only conjecture. Some think that it was Phrygia, in the northwest corner of Asia Minor, and that from that station successive bands of emigrants gradually spread themselves over Greece and the shores and islands of the Ægean.

The last companies to leave the Phrygian home appear to have been the ancestors of the Ionians and Dorians. In the opinion of some, the Ionians followed the course of the Phrygian rivers to the coast, and, after having there developed into a sea-loving people, passed over to continental Greece by way of the Ægean islands; while the Dorians crossed the Hellespont into Europe, and, after living for a while as farmers and shepherds in the hilly regions of Macedonia or Northern Greece, pushed southward, in time establishing themselves as the dominant race in the Peloponnesus.



Others, however, are inclined to believe that all the Hellenes entered Greece by the way of Thrace.

**Oriental Immigrants.**—According to their own traditions the early growth of civilization among the European Hellenes was promoted by the settlement among them of Oriental immigrants, who brought with them the arts and culture of the different countries of the East.

From Egypt, legend affirms, came Cecrops, bringing with him the arts, learning, and priestly wisdom of the Nile valley. He is represented as the builder of the citadel (the *Cecropia*) of what was afterwards the illustrious city of Athens. From the same land Danaus is also said to have come with his fifty daughters, and to have built the citadel of Argos. From Phœnicia Cadmus brought the letters of the alphabet, and founded the city of Thebes. The Phrygian Pelops, the progenitor of the renowned heroes Agamemnon and Menelaus, settled in the southern peninsula, which was called after him the Peloponnesus (the Island of Pelops).

The nucleus of fact in all these legends is probably this,—That the European Greeks received the primary elements of their culture from the East through their Asiatic kinsmen. That they did in this manner receive at least many of the rudiments of their civilization does not admit of doubt. For at the very time that the Ionian Greeks were spreading themselves over the western coast of Asia Minor and the islands of the Archipelago, the Phœnicians were establishing their colonies in Crete and along the Asian shores, and carrying with them the arts and culture of Egypt and Babylonia. At the same time the Hittites also, having extended their power throughout Asia Minor, were spreading the civilization of the Euphrates to the shores of the Ægean.

Thus the Asiatic Greeks were early brought into contact with the civilization of the East; that they profited by the contact is shown by the fact that among them appeared the first-fruits of Hellenic art and thought. These new germs of culture, vitalized by their own quickening genius, the Oriental Greeks transmitted to their kinsmen in Europe, where they were destined, in the favor-

ing soil of Attica, to produce the crowning flower of Hellenic civilization.

**The Greek Genius.** — That what has just been said respecting the transmission of the primary elements of Greek culture from the Orient, may not leave a wrong impression upon the mind of the student, — leading him to suppose that in the old civilizations of the East he has found the chief sources of Hellenic civilization, — we must here say, that the most profound students of Greek history believe that the chief factor after all in the wonderful product we call Greek civilization, was the Greek genius itself.

For it is with races as with individuals. Men of an extraordinary personality are not the product of education or of circumstances. They are born, not made. It is the mental aptitudes of the Hellenes, that original, versatile, imaginative genius, that love of the beautiful and sense of proportion, that sensitiveness to the influences of nature which we have already mentioned as characterizing the Ionian Greeks above all others, — it is these rare mental qualities, gained we know not how, which the Greeks possessed when they entered the lands they occupied in historic times, that afford the only satisfactory explanation of their wonderful achievements in art, in literature, and in philosophy. Without the quickening power of the Greek genius, the germs of culture transmitted to the West from the East would have lain dormant, or have developed into less perfect and less admirable forms. It was a case of good seed falling into good ground — and it brought forth a hundred-fold.

**Local Patriotism of the Greeks: the City the Political Unit.** — The narrow political sympathies of the ancient Greeks prevented their ever uniting to form a single nation. The city was with them the political unit. It was regarded as a distinct, self-governing state, just like a modern nation. A citizen of one city was an alien in any other: he could not marry a woman of a city not his own, nor hold property in houses or lands within its territory.

But the Greek idea of a city was quite different from ours. An ancient Greek city included primarily nothing more than a territorial area, or district. Thus the districts, or townships, of Arcadia had applied to them the Greek word (*πόλις*) for city.

However, a district sprinkled with isolated dwellings or unprotected villages did not constitute an *ideal* city. There must be included in the district a walled town, containing public buildings, such as theatres, temples, agoras, and gymnasia. Often the city consisted simply of a walled town, with a few surrounding farms, a strip of sea-coast, or a small mountain-encircled valley or plain. In other cases, the city embraced, besides the central town, a large number of smaller places. Thus the city of Athens, in its most prosperous days, included all Attica with its one hundred and seventy-four villages and towns, some of which were walled places. Each of these villages, politically speaking, was an integral part of Athens, and those of their inhabitants who enjoyed the privilege of voting in the public assembly at the capital were Athenian citizens.

According to the Greek conception, again, the model city (or *state*, as we should say) must not be over large. In this, as in everything else, the ancient Greeks applied the Delphian rule — “Measure in all things.” “A small city,” says one of their poets, “set upon a rock and well governed, is better than all foolish Nineveh.” Aristotle thought that the ideal city should not have more than ten thousand citizens. According to this, Athens was too large for a model city, as its list of citizens numbered at one time somewhere between twenty and thirty thousand.

**Hellenes and Barbarians.** — While the narrow political sympathies of the ancient Greeks separated them into numerous petty city-states, and prevented the various Hellenic tribes from ever coalescing into a real nation, still the bonds of race, of language, and of religion tended to draw them all together into a sort of fraternal union, or brotherhood. They always regarded themselves as members of a single family: all were descended, according to

their fabled genealogy, from the common progenitor Hellen.<sup>1</sup> All non-Hellenic peoples they called *Barbarians*. At first this term scarcely meant more than "unintelligible folk," carrying with it no intimation of lack of culture in the people to whom it was applied. But later, when the Greeks became conscious of their intellectual superiority to their neighbors, it came to express not simply aversion to a foreign tongue, but contempt founded upon inferiority.

<sup>1</sup> According to the mythical genealogy of the Greeks, Hellen (son of Deucalion, the Grecian Noah) had three sons, Æolus, Dorus, and Xuthus. Æolus and Dorus were the ancestors respectively of the Æolians and Dorians. Xuthus had two sons, Ion and Achæus, the first the progenitor of the Ionians, and the second of the Achæans.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE LEGENDARY OR HEROIC AGE.

(From the earliest times to 776 B.C.)

**Character of the Legendary Age.** — The real history of the Greeks does not begin before the eighth century B.C. All that lies back of that date is an inseparable mixture of myth, legend, and fact. Yet this shadowy period forms the background of Grecian history, and we cannot understand the ideas and acts of the Greeks of historic times without some knowledge, at least, of what they believed their ancestors did and experienced in those prehistoric ages.

So, as a sort of prelude to the story we have to tell, we shall repeat some of the legends of the Greeks respecting their national heroes and their great labors and undertakings. But it must be carefully borne in mind that these legends are not history. Where, however, there seems to be sufficient ground to justify an opinion, we shall suggest what may be the grain of truth in any particular legend, or what part of it may be a dim though confused remembrance of actual events.

**The Heroes: Heracles, Theseus, and Minos.** — The Greeks believed that their ancestors were a race of heroes of divine or semi-divine lineage. Every tribe, district, city, and village even, preserved traditions of its heroes, whose wonderful exploits were commemorated in song and story. Many of these personages acquired national renown, and became the revered heroes of the whole Greek race.

The heroes were doubtless, in some cases, historical persons, but so much of myth and fable has gathered about their names

that it is impossible to separate that which is really historical from what is purely fabulous.

Among the most noted of the heroes are Heracles (commonly called Hercules), Theseus, and Minos.

Heracles, who sprang from the royal line established at Argos by Danaus (see p. 158), was the greatest of the national heroes of the Greeks. He is represented as performing, besides various other exploits, twelve superhuman labors, — among which were the slaying of the Nemean lion, the destruction of the Lernæan hydra, the cleansing of the stables of Augeas, and the bringing of Cerberus from the infernal regions, — and as being at last translated from a blazing pyre to a place among the immortal gods.

The myth of Heracles is made up mainly of the very same fables that were told of the Chaldæan solar hero Izdubar (see p. 73). Through the Phœnicians and the peoples of Asia Minor, these stories found their way to the Greeks, who ascribed to their own Heracles the deeds of the Chaldæan sun-god. Like the Babylonian Izdubar, Heracles was at first a solar divinity; but, transformed and idealized by the Greek imagination, he became at last the personification and ideal type of the lofty moral qualities of heroism, self-sacrifice, and endurance, as well as the symbol of the bravery, sufferings, and achievements of the pioneers of Greek civilization.

Theseus, a descendant of Cecrops, was the favorite hero of the Athenians, being one of their legendary kings. Among his great works were the clearing of the Isthmian highways of robbers, the slaying of the Minotaur, — a monster which Minos, king of Crete, kept in a labyrinth, and fed upon youths and maidens sent from Athens as a forced tribute, — the defeat of the Amazons, and the consolidation of the twelve boroughs, or cantons, of Attica into a single state.

The legend of Theseus doubtless contains a substantial kernel of history. The consolidation of Attica and the founding of Athens were certainly historical events, while the slaying of the Minotaur may be taken to symbolize the freeing of the Athenians



from a tribute paid to the Phœnicians of Crete, whose custom of sacrificing children to Moloch probably lent to the myth its peculiar form.

Minos, who has already been mentioned as the king of Crete, was one of the great tribal heroes of the Dorians. Legend makes him a legislator of divine wisdom, the suppressor of piracy in the Grecian seas, and the founder of the first great maritime state of Hellas.

**Associated Undertakings of the Heroes.** — Besides the labors and exploits of single heroes, such as we have been naming, the legends of the Greeks tell of three especially memorable enterprises which were conducted by bands of heroes. These were the Argonautic Expedition, the Seven against Thebes, and the Siege of Troy.

**The Argonautic Expedition.** — The tale of this enterprise is told with many variations in the legends of the Greeks. Jason, a prince of Thessaly, with fifty companion heroes, among whom were Heracles, Theseus, and Orpheus, the latter a musician of super-human skill, the music of whose lyre moved brutes and stones, set sail in "a fifty-oared galley," called the *Argo* (hence the name *Argonauts*, given to the heroes), in search of a "golden fleece" which was fabled to be nailed to a tree and watched by a dragon, in the Grove of Ares, on the eastern shores of the Euxine, an inhospitable region of unknown terrors. The expedition is successful, and, after many wonderful adventures, the heroes return in triumph with the sacred relic.

Different meanings have been given to this tale. In its primitive form it was doubtless a pure myth of the rain-clouds; but in its later forms we may believe it to symbolize the maritime explorations in the eastern seas, of some of the tribes (conjecturally the Minyans, of Orchomenus in Bœotia) of Pelasgian Greece.

**The Seven against Thebes.** — The story of the War of the Seven against Thebes is second in interest and importance only to that of the Siege of Troy. The tale begins with Laius, king of Thebes, — the third in descent from Cadmus, — who, having been

warned by an oracle that he would be slain by his own son, should one be born to him, thought to prevent the fulfilment of the prediction by causing his infant child to be exposed on Mount Cithæron. The child was rescued by a herdsman, and brought up by the king of Corinth, having been given the name of Œdipus.

Upon reaching manhood, Œdipus went to the oracle at Delphi to make inquiry respecting his parentage. The only answer he received was a warning not to return to his native country, or else he would kill his father and become the husband of his own mother. Therefore, avoiding Corinth, Œdipus turned towards Thebes, but on the way met Laius with an attendant, and in a quarrel which arose killed the king, not knowing him to be his father.

Shortly after this event the Thebans were distressed by a woman-headed monster, called the Sphinx, who proposed a riddle<sup>1</sup> to them, and, as often as they failed in their answers, seized and devoured one of the inhabitants of the city. The crown of Thebes and the hand of the widow (Jocasta) of Laius were offered to any one who should solve the riddle. Œdipus interpreted the riddle, and became king of Thebes and the husband of Jocasta. Thus the oracle was fulfilled.

Because of the unwitting crime, a terrible doom overhangs the royal house. The truth finally becomes known. Jocasta hangs herself. Œdipus, in a frenzy of agony, tears out his own eyes. His sons, Eteocles, and Polynices drive him from Thebes, and upon them he invokes the curses of Heaven. The unhappy king is accompanied in his exile by his daughters Antigone and Ismene.

The brothers now quarrel respecting the throne. Polynices flees to Argos, and seeks aid of Adrastus, king of that city. With five chiefs besides himself and Polynices, Adrastus makes war upon Thebes. All the heroes except Adrastus are killed (if we may thus speak of one, Amphiaraus, whom the opening earth received

<sup>1</sup> "What animal walks on four legs in the morning, on two at noon, and on three at night?" Answer: *man*, who creeps in infancy, walks upright in manhood, and supports his steps with a staff in old age.

unharméd into the world of shades), while the two unnatural brothers also fall, each by the hand of the other.

Kreon, the new king of Thebes, refuses to allow Adrastus to bury or burn the bodies of his fallen companions. In his distress, Adrastus supplicates Theseus, king of Athens, to avenge the wrong, — for a denial of the rites of sepulture was considered by the Greeks a most impious act. Theseus makes war upon the king of Thebes, overcomes him, and secures burial honors for the bodies of the slain heroes.

Ten years after the unsuccessful attempt of the seven chieftains, the sons of those who were lost, headed, according to one account, by Adrastus, and, according to others, by Thersander, the son of Polynices, waged a second war against Thebes, to avenge the death of their fathers. They took the city and destroyed it. This expedition was known as the War of the Descendants (Epigoni).

This legend branches out into a hundred tales, which form the basis of many of the greatest productions of the Greek tragic poets.

**The Trojan War** (legendary date 1194-1184 B.C.). — The Trojan War was an event about which gathered a great circle of tales and poems, all full of an undying interest and fascination. Homer, in his great epic of the *Iliad*, and a host of succeeding writers called the cyclic poets, rehearsed, with a charm of language and beauty of imagery never surpassed, the feats of the struggling heroes, Greek and Trojan, beneath the walls of Ilios.

Ilios, or Troy, was the capital of a strong empire, represented as Grecian in race and language, which had grown up in Asia Minor, along the shores of the Hellespont. The traditions tell how Paris, son of Priam, king of Troy, visited the Spartan king Menelaus, and ungenerously requited his hospitality by secretly bearing away to Troy his wife Helen, famous for her rare beauty.

All the heroes of Greece flew to arms to avenge the wrong. A host of one hundred thousand warriors was speedily gathered. Agamemnon, brother of Menelaus and "king of men," was chosen leader of the expedition. Under him were the "lion-hearted

Achilles," of Thessaly, the "crafty Ulysses" (Odysseus), king of Ithaca, Ajax, "the swift son of Oïleus," the Telemonian Ajax, the aged Nestor, and many more—the most valiant heroes of all Hellas. Twelve hundred galleys bore the gathered clans from Aulis, in Greece, across the Ægean to the Trojan shores.

For ten years the Greeks and their allies hold in close siege the city of Priam. The Trojans have as allies many of the states of Asia Minor, as well as warriors from more remote lands. On the plains beneath the walls of the capital, the warriors of the two armies fight in general battle, or contend in single encounter. At first, Achilles is foremost in every fight; but a fair-faced maiden, who fell to him as a prize, having been taken from him by his chief, Agamemnon, he is filled with wrath, and sulks in his tent. Though the Greeks are often sorely pressed, still the angered hero refuses them his aid. At last, however, his friend Patroclus is killed by Hector, eldest son of Priam, and then Achilles goes forth to avenge his death. In a fierce combat he slays Hector, fastens his body to his chariot wheels, and drags it thrice around the walls of Troy.

These latter events, beginning with the wrath of Achilles and ending with the funeral rites of Patroclus and Hector, form the subject of the *Iliad* of Homer.

The city is at last taken through a device of the "crafty Ulysses." Upon the plain in sight of the walls is built a wooden statue of a horse, in the body of which are hidden several Grecian warriors. Then the Greeks retire to their ships, as though about to abandon the siege. The Trojans issue from their gates and gather in wondering crowds about the image. They believe it to be an offering sacred to Athena, and so dare not destroy it; but, on the other hand, misled by certain omens and by a lying Greek named Sinon, they level a place in the walls of their city, and drag the statue within. At night the concealed warriors issue from the horse, open the gates of the city to the Grecians, and Troy is sacked and burned to the ground. The aged Priam is slain, after having seen his sons and many of his warriors perish before his

face. Æneas, with his aged father Anchises, and a few devoted followers, escapes, and, after long wanderings by land and by sea, becomes the fabled founder of the Roman race in Italy.

It is a matter of difficulty to point out the nucleus of fact in this the most elaborate and interesting of the Grecian legends. Some believe it to be the dim recollection of a prehistoric conflict between the Greeks and the natives of Asia Minor, arising from the attempt of the former to secure a foothold upon the coast. As, at the time of the composition of the *Iliad*, the coast was in the possession of Greeks, the Trojans are represented as Greeks, in order that the descriptions may correspond to the then existing state of things.

That there really existed in prehistoric times such a city as Troy, or Ilios, has been placed beyond doubt by the excavations and discoveries of Dr. Schliemann.<sup>1</sup>

**Return of the Grecian Chieftains.** — After the fall of Troy, the Grecian chieftains and princes returned home. The poets represent the gods as withdrawing their protection from the hitherto favored heroes, because they had not spared the altars of the Trojans. So, many of them were driven in endless wanderings over sea and land. Homer's *Odyssey* portrays the sufferings of the "much-enduring" Ulysses, impelled by divine wrath to long journeyings through strange seas.

In some cases, according to the tradition, advantage had been taken of the absence of the princes, and their thrones had been usurped. Thus at Argos, Ægisthus had won the unholy love of Clytemnestra, wife and queen of Agamemnon, who on his return was murdered by the guilty couple. In pleasing contrast with this we have exhibited to us the constancy of Penelope, although sought by many suitors during the absence of her husband Ulysses.

**The Dorian Invasion, or the Return of the Heraclidæ** (legendary date 1104 B.C.). — We set the tradition of the return of the Heraclidæ apart from the legends of the three enterprises just detailed, for the reason that it undoubtedly contains quite a large

<sup>1</sup> See his *Ilios* and *Troja*.

historical element. It seems to be a remembrance, though a confused one, of a real migration and conquest, and of a resulting shifting of the population of prehistoric Greece.

The traditions of the Greeks tell how Heracles, an Achæan, in the times before the Trojan War, ruled over the Peloponnesian Achæans. Just before that event his children were driven from the land. Eighty years after the war, the hundred years of exile appointed by the fates having expired, the descendants of the hero, at the head of the Dorians from Northern Greece, returned, and with their aid effected the conquest of the greater part of the Peloponnesus, and established themselves as conquerors and masters in the land that had formerly been ruled by their semi-divine ancestor.

This return of the descendants of Heracles to the land of their fathers has been likened to the return of the children of Israel to Palestine, and the conquest of that land by them on the ground of an ancient claim to the country through their ancestor Abraham.

The nucleus of fact in this legend of the return of the Heraclidæ, as we have already said, is doubtless a prehistoric invasion of the Peloponnesus by the Dorians from the north of Greece, and the expulsion or subjugation of the native inhabitants of the peninsula. The entire movement probably occupied several centuries.

The Dorians established in the different districts of which they took possession aristocratic and military governments, and developed, generally, social and political systems characterized by austere and martial discipline.

Towards their conquerors, the subjected Achæans cherished an inextinguishable hatred, save in some parts where the two races appear to have quietly blended, and the distinctive relation of conqueror and conquered seems to have been almost wholly obliterated. Some of the dispossessed Achæans, crowding towards the north of the Peloponnesus, drove out the Ionians who occupied the southern shore of the Corinthian Gulf, and settling there, gave the name *Achaia* to all that region.

Arcadia, in the center of the Peloponnesus, was another district



which did not fall into the hands of the Dorians. The people here, even down to the latest times, retained their primitive customs and country mode of life; hence *Arcadian* came to mean rustic and artless.

**Migrations to Asia Minor.**—The Greek legends represent that the Dorian invasion of the Peloponnesus resulted in three distinct migrations from the mother land to the shores of Asia Minor and the adjoining islands.

The northwestern shore of Asia Minor was settled by Æolian emigrants from Bœotia, among whom were many Achæan refugees from the Peloponnesus.<sup>1</sup> The neighboring island of Lesbos became the home and center of Æolian culture in poetry and music.

The coast to the south of the Æolians was occupied by Ionian emigrants from the neighborhood of the Corinthian Gulf, who, uniting with their Ionian kinsmen already settled upon that shore, built up twelve splendid cities (Ephesus, Miletus, etc.), which finally united to form the celebrated Ionian confederacy.

South of the Ionians, all along the southwestern shore of Asia Minor, the Dorians established their colonies. They also settled the important islands of Cos and Rhodes, and conquered and colonized Crete.

The traditions relating to these various settlements represent them as having been effected in a very short period; but it is probable that the movement embraced several centuries,—possibly a longer time than has been occupied by the English race in colonizing the different lands of the Western World.

With the migrations of the Æolians, Ionians, and Dorians to the Asiatic shores, the *Legendary Age of Greece* comes to an end. From this time forward we tread upon fairly firm historic ground.

<sup>1</sup> Curtius believes that the struggle which must inevitably have arisen between these emigrants and the inhabitants of the Asiatic coast may have been the basis of the story of the Trojan War. "We are justified," he says, "in transferring this war out of its isolation, in which it remains incomprehensible, into a wider connection of events, and out of the poetic times, whither it was carried by song, into its actual period."

**Society in the Heroic Age.** — While it is true that the legendary stories and poems of the Greeks cannot be received as reliable accounts of real events, still they may be regarded as reflecting with very great accuracy the manners, customs, and general culture of the time in which they had their origin. The poems of Homer, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which were composed probably as early as the eighth or ninth century B.C., are the chief sources whence are drawn the materials from which historians venture to form a picture of Greek society in the Heroic Age. It remains for us to add a few words upon this subject to complete our sketch of legendary Greece.

In Homeric times the Greeks were ruled by hereditary kings, who were believed to be of divine or superhuman lineage. The king was at once the lawgiver, the judge, and the military leader of his people. He was expected to prove his divine right to rule, by his courage, strength, wisdom, and eloquence. When he ceased to display these qualities, "the sceptre departed from him."

The king was surrounded by a council (*boulé*) of chiefs or nobles. This council, however, was simply an advisory body. The king listened to what the nobles had to say upon any measure he might propose, and then acted according to his own will or judgment, restrained only by the time-honored customs of the community.

Next to the council of the chiefs, there was a general assembly, called the *Agora*, made up of all the common freemen. The members of this body could not take part in any debate, nor could they vote upon any question. They were called together to hear matters discussed by the king and his chiefs, that they might know what was resolved upon, and perhaps learn the arguments for and against the resolution. This body, so devoid seemingly of all authority in the Homeric age, was destined to become the all-powerful popular assembly in the democratic cities of historic Greece.

Of the condition of the common freemen we know but little: the legendary tales were concerned chiefly with the kings and

nobles. We are certain, however, that the well-to-do class owned their farms, and cultivated them with their own hands; and that the poorer class labored for hire on the estates of the nobles. Slavery existed, but the slaves did not constitute as numerous a class as they became in historic times, nor do they seem in general to have been treated harshly.

In the family, the wife holds a much more dignified and honored position than she occupied in later times. The charming story of the constant Penelope, which we find in the *Odyssey*, assures us that the Homeric age cherished a chivalric feeling for woman.

In all ranks of society life was marked by a sort of patriarchal simplicity. Manual labor was not yet thought to be degrading. Ulysses constructs his own house and raft, and boasts of his skill in swinging the scythe and guiding the plow. Spinning and weaving were the chief occupation of the women of all classes.

One pleasing and prominent virtue of the age was hospitality. There were no public inns in those times, hence a sort of gentle necessity forced to the entertainment of wayfarers. The hospitality accorded was the same free and impulsive welcome that the Arab sheik of to-day extends to the traveller whom chance brings to his tent. The belief, too, that the gods sometimes visited the earth in the guise of men also prompted, in early times, the kindly reception of strangers, since thereby angels might haply be entertained unawares. The very best the house afforded was set before the wayfarer, and not till he had refreshed himself was he asked as to his journey and its object. When thus by chance a person, even though of another race, became the guest of a Greek, this circumstance made him, as it were, a kinsman, and henceforth a new relation subsisted between those thus casually brought together. One seeking a favor of another might claim that their ancestors had broken bread together, and the appeal was sacred, and seldom made in vain.

But while hospitable, the nobles of the heroic age were often cruel, violent, and treacherous. Homer represents his heroes as committing without a blush all sorts of frauds and villainies.

Piracy was considered an honorable occupation. "It was customary in welcoming a stranger to ask him whether his object in travelling was to enrich himself by piracy, just as we might to-day ask a person whether his object be to enrich himself by mercantile speculation."

Art and architecture were in a rudimentary state. Yet some advance had been made. The cities were walled, and the palaces of the kings possessed a certain barbaric splendor. Coined money was unknown; wealth was reckoned chiefly in flocks and herds, and in uncoined metals. The art of writing was probably unknown, at least there is no certain mention of it; and sculpture could not have been in an advanced state, as the Homeric poems make no mention of statues. Commerce was yet in its infancy. Although the Greeks were to become a great maritime people, still in the Homeric age they had evidently explored the sea but little. The Phœnicians then ruled the waves, and were the intermediaries of the Mediterranean world. The Greeks in those early times knew but little of the world beyond Greece proper and the neighboring islands and shores. Scarcely an echo of the din of life from the then ancient and mighty cities of Egypt and Chaldæa seems to have reached their ears.

## CHAPTER III.

## RELIGION OF THE GREEKS.

**Introductory.** — Without at least some little knowledge of the religious ideas and institutions of the ancient Greeks, we should find very many passages of their history wholly unintelligible. Hence a few remarks in regard to these matters will be here in place. We shall begin with a word respecting the cosmography of the Greeks, or their ideas of the figure and relation of the different parts of the universe.

**Cosmography of the Greeks.** — The Greeks supposed the earth to be, as it appears, a plane, round in form like a shield. Around it flowed the “mighty strength of the ocean river,” a stream broad and deep, beyond which on all sides lay realms of Cimmerian darkness and terror. From this encircling ocean stream, all the rivers and seas of the earth drew their waters. The heavens were a solid vault, or dome, whose edge shut down close upon the earth.

Beneath the earth, reached by subterranean passages, was Hades, a vast region, the realm of departed shades. Still beneath this was Tartarus, a pit deep and dark, made fast by strong gates of brass and iron. This awful prison-house of the Titans was as far beneath the earth as the heavens were above; and of the latter distance we are left to conjecture from the fact that when Zeus, in a fit of anger, hurled Hephæstus from the heavens to earth, he fell “from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve.” Sometimes the poets represent the gloomy regions beyond the ocean stream, as the cheerless abode of the dead.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These conceptions belong to the early period of Greek mythology. Later, when the geographical ideas of the Greeks had become more expanded, and their moral feelings had grown stronger, the topography of the under-world

The sun was an archer-god, borne in a fiery chariot up and down the steep pathway of the skies. Awaiting the god in the west, on the ocean stream, was a winged couch, in which he sank to rest while gentle winds wafted the golden vessel over the waters round to the east, where a new chariot and fresh steeds awaited him. Naturally it was imagined that the regions in the extreme east and west, which were bathed in the near splendors of the sunrise and the sunset, were lands of delight and plenty. The eastern was the favored country of the Ethiopians, a land which even Zeus himself so loved to visit that often he was found absent from Olympus when sought by suppliants. The western region, adjoining the ocean stream, was the delightful Garden of the Hesperides. Here, too, were the Islands of the Blest (Elysium), the abodes of the shades of heroes and poets.

**The Olympian Council.** — There were twelve members of the celestial council, six gods and as many goddesses. The male deities were Zeus, the father and ruler of gods and men, and the wielder of the thunderbolts; Poseidon, ruler of the sea; Apollo, or Phœbus, the god of light, of music, of healing, of poetry, and of prophecy; Ares, the god of war; Hephæstus, the deformed god of fire, and the patron of the useful arts dependent upon it, the forger of the thunderbolts of Zeus, and the fashioner of arms and of all sorts of metal work for the heroes and the gods; Hermes, the wing-footed herald of the celestials, the god of invention and of commerce, himself a thief and the patron of thieves.

The female divinities were Hera, the proud and rightly jealous queen of Zeus; Athena, or Pallas, — who sprang full-grown from

was considerably modified. Hades (at first called Erebus) was now conceived as consisting of two vast regions, Tartarus and Elysium, the former having been brought up from beneath and made the place of punishment for the souls of evil men, and the latter having been taken down from the western region of the earth (see above), and made the happy abode of all the righteous. See Keightley's *Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy*, pp. 80, 81, fourth edition.



the forehead of Zeus, — the goddess of wisdom, and the patroness of the domestic arts ; Artemis, the goddess of the chase ; Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, born of the sea-foam ; Hestia, the goddess of the hearth ; Demeter, the earth-mother, the goddess of grains and harvests.<sup>1</sup>

**Lesser Deities and Monsters.** — Besides the great gods and goddesses that constituted the Olympian Council, there was an almost infinite number of other deities, celestial personages, and monsters neither human nor divine.

Hades (Pluto) ruled over the lower realms ; Dionysus (Bacchus) was the god of wine ; Eros (Cupid), of love ; Iris was the goddess of the rainbow, and the special messenger of Zeus ; Hebe (goddess) was the cupbearer of the celestials ; the goddess Nemesis was the punisher of crime, and particularly the queller of the proud and arrogant ; Æolus was the ruler of the winds, which he confined in a cave secured by mighty gates.

There were nine Muses, inspirers of art and song. The Nymphs (Naiads, Nereids, Dryads, Hamadryads, etc.) were beautiful maidens, who peopled the woods, the fields, the rivers, the lakes, and the ocean. Three Fates allotted life and death, and three Furies (Eumenides, or Erinnyes) avenged crime, especially murder and unnatural crimes. The Harpies were terrible monsters with female faces and the bodies and claws of birds. They were sisters, three in number, and lived on the Strophades, in the Ionian Sea. They tore and devoured their prey with greedy voracity. The Gorgons were also three sisters, with hair entwined with serpents. A single gaze upon them chilled the beholder to

<sup>1</sup> The Latin names of these divinities are as follows: Zeus = Jupiter ; Poseidon = Neptune ; Apollo = Apollo ; Ares = Mars ; Hephæstus = Vulcan ; Hermes = Mercury ; Hera = Juno ; Athena = Minerva ; Artemis = Diana ; Aphrodite = Venus ; Hestia = Vesta ; Demeter = Ceres.

These Latin names, however, are not the equivalents of the Greek names, and should not be used as such. The mythologies of the Hellenes and Romans were as distinct as their languages. Consult Rawlinson's *Religions of the Ancient World*.

stone. The Chimæra was a monster with “the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a serpent, and vomited forth fire.” (From this impossible monster we have come to call any improbable thing a “chimera.”) Besides these there were the Dragon, which guarded the golden apples of the Hesperides; Cerberus, the watch-dog of Hades; Scylla and Charybdis, sea-monsters that made perilous the passage of the Sicilian Straits; the Centaurs, the Cyclops, the Sphinx, and a thousand others.

**Explanations of the Mythological Monsters.**—Many at least of these monsters were simply personifications of the human passions or of the malign and destructive powers of nature. Thus, according to some interpreters, the Furies were the embodiment of an aroused and accusing conscience; the Harpies were the swift storms, that tear to pieces and engulf the vessel of the mariner; the Gorgons were also tempests, which lash the sea into a fury that paralyzes the affrighted sailor; the Chimæra was a volcano in Lycia, whose foot and slopes abounded in different animals (the Chimæra flame is still seen issuing from a mountain opposite Olympus); Scylla and Charybdis were dangerous whirlpools off the coast of Sicily.

The fact that these monsters were merely personifications of human feelings or of the evil and terrifying powers or aspects of nature was, indeed, forgotten, or not understood at all, by the common people; they believed them to be real creatures, with all the parts and habits given them by the poets,—and often the poets themselves seemed possessed of the same idea.

**Nature of the Gods.**—The great gods and goddesses were simply magnified human beings, possessing all their virtues, and often their weaknesses. They give way to fits of anger and jealousy. “Zeus deceives, and Hera (Juno) is constantly practising her wiles.” All the celestial council, at the sight of Hephæstus limping across the palace floor, burst into “inextinguishable laughter”; and Aphrodite, weeping, moves all to tears. They surpass mortals rather in power, than in size of body. They can render themselves visible or invisible to human eyes. Their food is am-

brosia and nectar ; their movements are swift as light. They may suffer pain ; but death can never come to them, for they are immortal. Their abode is Mount Olympus and the airy regions above the earth.

**Modes of Divine Communication.** — In the early ages the gods were wont, it was believed, to visit the earth and mingle with men. But even in Homer's time this familiar intercourse was a thing of the past — a tradition of a golden age that had passed away. Their forms were no longer seen, their voices no longer heard. In these later and more degenerate times the recognized modes of divine communication with men were by oracles, and by casual and unusual sights and sounds, as thunder and lightning, a sudden tempest, an eclipse, a flight of birds, — particularly of birds that mount to a great height, as these were supposed to know the secrets of the heavens, — the appearance or action of the sacrificial victims, or any strange coincidence.

The art of interpreting these signs or omens was called the art of divination. It is probable that this art was introduced into Greece from Chaldæa by the way of Egypt and the coast countries of Asia Minor.

**Oracles.** — But though the gods often revealed their will and intentions through signs and portents, still they granted a more special communication of counsel through what were known as *oracles*.<sup>1</sup> These communications, it was believed, were made by Zeus, and especially by Apollo, who was the god of prophecy, the Revealer.

Not everywhere, but only in chosen places, did these gods manifest their presence and communicate the divine will. These

<sup>1</sup> We should perhaps add that prophets were not unknown among the Greeks. These were persons who, like the Hebrew prophets, were believed to have a supernatural insight into the future. Sometimes this gift was hereditary, and then a family or house came to be regarded as set apart from ordinary men. Among the most noted of the Greek prophets were Tiresias, the blind soothsayer of Thebes, and Calchas, the adviser of the Grecians at the siege of Troy.

favored spots were called oracles, as were also the responses there received. There were twenty-two oracles of Apollo in different parts of the Grecian world, but a much smaller number of those of Zeus. These were usually situated in wild and desolate spots — in dark forests or among gloomy mountains.

The most renowned of the oracles were that of the Pelasgian Zeus at Dodona, in Epirus, and that of Apollo at Delphi, in Phocis. At Dodona the priests listened in the dark forests for the voice of Zeus in the rustling leaves of the sacred oak. At Delphi there was a deep fissure in the ground, which emitted stupefying vapors, that were thought to be the inspiring breath of Apollo. Over the spot was erected a splendid temple, in honor of the oracle. The revelation was generally received by the Pythia, or priestess,<sup>1</sup> seated upon a tripod placed over the orifice. As she became overpowered by the influence of the prophetic exhalations, she uttered the message of the god. These mutterings of the Pythia were taken down by attendant priests, interpreted, and written in hexameter verse. Sometimes the will of Zeus was communicated to the pious seeker by dreams and visions granted to him while sleeping in the temple of the oracle.

The oracle of Delphi gained a celebrity wide as the world: it was often consulted by the monarchs of Asia and the people of Rome in time of extreme danger and perplexity. Among the Greeks scarcely any undertaking was entered upon without the will and sanction of the oracle being first sought.

Especially true was this in the founding of colonies. Apollo was believed "to take delight in the foundation of new cities." No colony could prosper that had not been established under the superintendence of the Delphian god.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Apollo speaks through the mouth of feeble girls and women, as a sign that it is no human wisdom and art which reveals the divine will." — CURTIUS.

<sup>2</sup> The priests of the sanctuary kept themselves perfectly informed respecting the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean, and thus were able intelligently to direct these great undertakings. It was in its superintendence of Greek colonization that, in the estimation of Curtius, the Delphian oracle rendered its greatest and most permanent service to civilization.

Some of the responses of the oracle contained plain and wholesome advice; but very many of them, particularly those that implied a knowledge of the future, were obscure and ingeniously ambiguous, so that they might correspond with the event however affairs should turn, and thus the credit of the oracle be unimpaired. Thus, Cræsus is told that, if he undertake his expedition against Persia, he will destroy a great empire. He did, indeed; — but the empire was his own. Again, the Spartans, seeking to know whether they will be successful in a contemplated war against the Athenians, are told that they “will gain the victory, if they will fight with all their might.”

While it doubtless is true that the oracles owed their origin to a misinterpretation — by an age entertaining childlike conceptions of the divine government of the world — of certain psychical phenomena, such as those upon which modern spiritualism is based, still they in a great measure owed their perpetuation, as has already been intimated, to deceit and fraud. The priestly colleges that controlled the sanctuaries became corrupt, and sold their influence to designing politicians, who by bribes secured such responses as would further their ends.

The Delphian oracle was at the height of its fame before the Persian War; in that crisis it did not take a bold or patriotic stand, and its reputation was sensibly impaired.

**Ideas of the Future.** — To the Greeks life was so bright and joyous a thing that they looked upon death as a great calamity. They therefore pictured life after death, except in the case of a favored few, as being hopeless and aimless.<sup>1</sup> The Elysian Fields, away in the land of sunset, were, indeed, filled with every delight; but these were the abode only of the great heroes and benefactors of the race. The great mass of mankind were doomed to Hades,

<sup>1</sup> Homer makes the shade of the great Achilles in Hades to say: —

“ I would be  
A laborer on earth, and serve for hire  
Some man of mean estate, who makes scant cheer,  
Rather than reign o'er all who have gone down  
To death.” — *Od.* XI. 489-90 [Bryant's Trans.].

where the spirit existed as "a feeble, joyless phantom." While we believe that the soul, freed from the body by the event of death, becomes stronger and more active, the Greeks thought that without the body it became but a feeble image of its former self. So long as the body remained unburied, the shade wandered restless in Hades; hence the sacredness of the rites of sepulture.

**The Sacred Games.**—The celebrated games of the Greeks had their origin in the belief of their Aryan ancestors that the shades of the dead were gratified or appeased by such spectacles as delighted them during their earthly life. During the Heroic Age these festivals were simply sacrifices or games performed at the tomb, or about the pyre of the dead. Gradually these grew into religious festivals observed by an entire city or community, and were celebrated near the oracle or shrine of the god in whose honor they were instituted; the idea now being that the gods were present at the festival, and took delight in the various contests and exercises. It was this sentiment and belief of the Greeks which lent such sanctity and importance to these festivals.

By the sixth century B.C. they had lost their local and assumed a national character. Among these festivals, four acquired a world-wide celebrity. These were the Olympian, celebrated in honor of Zeus, at Olympia, in the Peloponnesus; the Pythian, in honor of Apollo, near his shrine and oracle at Delphi; the Nemean, in honor of Zeus, at Nemea; and the Isthmian, held in honor of Poseidon, on the narrow isthmus of Corinth.

**The Olympian Games.**—Of these four national festivals the Olympian secured the greatest renown. In 776 B.C. Corcebus was victor in the foot-race at Olympia, and as from that time the names of the victors were carefully registered, that year came to be used by the Greeks as the starting-point in their chronology. The games were held every fourth year, and the intervals between two successive festivals was known as an Olympiad. The date of an occurrence was given by saying that it happened in the first, second, third, or fourth year of such an Olympiad—the first, second, or third, etc.



The contests consisted of foot-races, boxing, wrestling, and other athletic games. Later, chariot-racing was introduced, and became the most popular of all the contests. The competitors must be of the Hellenic race; must have undergone ten months' training in the gymnasium; and must, moreover, be unblemished by any crime against the state or sin against the gods. Spectators from all parts of the world crowded to the festival. The deputies of the different states vied with one another in the richness and splendor of their chariots and equipments, and in the magnificence of their retinues.

The victor was crowned with a garland of wild olives; heralds proclaimed his name abroad; his native city received him as a conqueror, sometimes through a breach made in the city walls; his statues, executed by eminent artists, were erected at Olympia and in his own city; sometimes even divine honor and worship were accorded to him; and poets and orators vied with the artist in perpetuating the name and deeds of him who had reflected undying honor upon his native state.

**Influence of the Grecian Games.** — For more than a thousand years these national festivals exerted an immense influence upon the social, religious, and literary life of Hellas. They enkindled among the widely scattered Hellenic states and colonies a common literary taste and enthusiasm; for into all the four great festivals, excepting the Olympian, were introduced, sooner or later, contests in poetry, oratory, and history. During the festivals, poets and historians read their choicest productions, and artists exhibited their masterpieces. The extraordinary honors accorded to the victors stimulated the contestants to the utmost, and strung to the highest tension every power of body and mind. To this fact we owe some of the grandest productions of the Greek race.

They moreover promoted intercourse and trade; for the festivals naturally became great centres of traffic and exchange during the continuance of the games. They softened, too, the manners of the people, turning their thoughts from martial exploits and giving the states respite from war; for during the month in which

the religious games were held it was sacrilegious to engage in military expeditions.

They also promoted intercourse between the different Grecian cities, or states, and kept alive common Hellenic feelings and sentiments. In all these ways, though they never drew the states into a common political union, still they did impress a common character upon their social, intellectual, and religious life.

**The Amphictyonic Council.** — Closely connected with the religious festivals were the so-called Amphictyonies, or “leagues of neighbors.” These were associations of a number of cities or tribes for the celebration of religious rites at some shrine, or for the protection of some particular temple.

Pre-eminent among all such unions was that known as the Delphic Amphictyony, or simply The Amphictyony. This was a league of twelve of the sub-tribes of Hellas, whose main object was the protection of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Another of its purposes was, by humane regulations, to mitigate the cruelties of war. This was one of the first steps taken in the practice of international law. The following oath was taken by the members of the league: “We will not destroy any Amphictyonic town, nor cut it off from running water, in war or in peace; if any one shall do so, we will march against him and destroy his city. If any one shall plunder the property of the god, or shall be cognizant thereof, or shall take treacherous counsel against the things in his temple at Delphi, we will punish him with foot and hand and voice, and by every means in our power.”

Another duty of the Amphictyonic tribes was to keep in repair the roads leading to the Delphian sanctuary. These were carefully levelled, and in rocky places smooth grooves of uniform gauge<sup>1</sup> were cut for the wheels of the chariots and gayly decorated cars which went up in a sort of festival procession to the games.

The so-called First Sacred War was a crusade of ten years car-

<sup>1</sup> “Throughout the territories of the Amphictyons in Central Greece and the Peloponnesus, these tracks had a uniform width of five feet and four inches.”

— CURTIUS.

ried on by the Amphictyons against the cities of Crissa and Cirrha for their robbery of the treasures of the Delphian temple. The cities were finally taken, levelled to the ground, and the wrath of the gods invoked upon any one who should dare to rebuild them. This contest occurred in the first part of the sixth century B.C. (600–590). The spoils of the war were devoted to the establishment of musical contests in honor of the Delphian Apollo. Thus originated the renowned Pythian festivals, to which allusion has already been made (see p. 181).

**Doctrine of the Divine Jealousy.** — One notion which the Greeks entertained concerning their gods colored so deeply all their conceptions of life that we must not fail to make mention of it here.

They were impressed, as all peoples and generations have been, with the mutations of fortune and the vicissitudes of life. Their observation and experience had taught them that long-continued good fortune and unusual prosperity often issue at last in sudden and overwhelming calamity. They attributed this to the jealousy of the gods, who, they imagined, were envious of mortals that through such prosperity seemed to have become too much like one of themselves. Thus the Greeks believed the downfall of Cræsus, after his extraordinary course of uninterrupted prosperity, to have been brought about by the envy of the celestials, and they colored the story to bear out this version of the matter.

Later, this idea of the divine *envy* was moralized into a conception of the righteous *indignation* of the gods, aroused by the insolence and presumptuous pride so inevitably engendered by over-great prosperity (see p. 312).

**The Suppliant.** — Whoso hardened his heart against the appeal of the suppliant, him the Furies pursued with undying vengeance. But only through certain formalities could one avail himself of the rights of a suppliant. Should one, upon the commission of a crime, flee to a temple, he became a suppliant of the god to whose altar he clung, and to harm him there was a most awful desecration of the shrine. The gods punished with dreadful severity

such impiety, and an inexpiable curse rested upon the house of the offender, while awful calamities were sure to fall upon the city or community that tolerated the presence of the accursed. Time and again the entire course of events in Greece was completely changed by the public feeling of aversion and anger aroused against some powerful family on account of some act of the nature of that mentioned, committed by one or more of its members (see pp. 202, 233).

To sit or kneel at the hearth of an enemy was also a most solemn form of supplication. An olive branch borne in the hand was still another form of supplication, which rendered especially sacred and inviolable the person of him who thus appealed for clemency.

We must here add, in order to anticipate the perplexity that might otherwise trouble the reader, that the harsh doctrine mentioned above of the inexpiable and hereditary character of certain crimes, was finally, like the idea of the Divine Jealousy, softened and moralized, and that it came to be believed that by certain rites of purification full atonement might be made for personal or ancestral guilt, and thus the workings of the original curse be stayed.

## CHAPTER IV.

AGE OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND OF COLONIZATION:  
GROWTH OF SPARTA AND OF ATHENS.

(776-500 B.C.)

## I. GENERAL FEATURES OF THE PERIOD.

**Introductory.** — A hasty sketch, such as we propose to give in this section, of the general features of the period upon which we now enter, — the period embraced between the close of the Legendary Age and the beginning of the Persian Wars, — will serve as a sort of introduction to the history during this same time of Sparta and Athens, the representative cities of Greece. On the other hand, the story of the early growth of these cities, which we shall give in the two following sections, will in turn illustrate what we shall here have to say respecting Hellenic affairs in general during this formative period of Greek history.

**The Homeric Monarchies give Place to Oligarchies.** — We have seen that in the Heroic Age the preferred form of government was a patriarchal monarchy. The *Iliad* says, “The rule of many is not a good thing: let us have one ruler only, — one king, — him to whom Zeus has given the sceptre and the tutelary sanctions.”<sup>1</sup>

But by the dawn of the historic period, the patriarchal monarchies of the Achæan age had given place, in almost all the Grecian cities, to oligarchies or aristocracies. The power of the “Zeus-born” kings had passed into the hands of the nobles of his council. In Sparta, however, the monarchy was not actually abolished, though the kings — there were two — were, as we shall learn, robbed of so much of their power that they remained scarcely more than shadow-sovereigns.

<sup>1</sup> II. 203-206.

**The Oligarchies give Way to Tyrannies.**—As the Homeric monarchies were superseded by oligarchies, so these in turn were superseded by tyrannies.

The nobles into whose hands the ancient royal authority had passed were often divided among themselves, and invariably opposed by the common freemen, who, as they grew in intelligence and wealth, naturally aspired to a place in the government. The issue of long contentions was the overthrow almost everywhere of oligarchical government and the establishment of the rule of a single person.

Usually this person was one of the nobility, who held himself out as the champion of the people, and who with their help usurped the government. One who had thus seized the government was called a Tyrant (*tyrannos*). By this term the Greeks did not mean one who rules harshly, but simply one who holds the supreme authority in the state illegally. Some of the Greek Tyrants were mild and beneficent rulers, though too often they were all that the name implies among us. Sparta was almost the only important state that did not fall into the hands of a Tyrant.

The so-called Age of the Tyrants lasted from 650 to 500 B.C. As is usual with usurpers, the Greek Tyrants exerted themselves to make their rule attractive by making it splendid. They instituted religious festivals, undertook great public works, and often gave a magnificent patronage to artists and poets. Hence the age of the Tyrannies was an important one in the history of Hellenic art and culture.

But the Tyrants sat upon very unstable thrones. The Greeks always had an inextinguishable hatred of arbitrary rule; and of course the nobles who were excluded from the government were continually plotting against the power of the usurper. Consequently the Tyrannies were, as a rule, short-lived, rarely lasting longer than three generations. They were usually violently overthrown, and the old oligarchies re-established, or democracies set up in their place. As a rule, the Dorian cities preferred oligarchical, and the Ionian cities democratical, government.



Sparta, which, as has been noted, never fell into the hands of a despot, was very active in aiding those cities that had been so unfortunate as to have their governments usurped by tyrants, to drive out the usurpers, and to re-establish their aristocratical constitutions. Athens, as we shall see, became the champion of democracy.

Among the most noted of the Tyrants were the Pisistratidæ, at Athens, of whom we shall speak hereafter; Periander, at Corinth (625-585 B.C.), who was a most cruel ruler, yet so generous a patron of artists and literary men that he was thought worthy of a place among the Seven Sages; and Polycrates, Tyrant of Samos (535-522 B.C.), who, with that island as a stronghold, and with a fleet of a hundred war-galleys, built up a sort of maritime kingdom in the Ægean, and for the space of more than a decade enjoyed such astonishing and uninterrupted prosperity, that it was believed his sudden downfall and death — he was allured to the Asian shore by a Persian satrap, and crucified — were brought about by the envy of the gods.<sup>1</sup>

**The Lawgivers.** — This period of political strife and constitutional changes gave birth in the Greek cities to numerous statesmen of great political discernment and sagacity, like Moses among the Hebrews, who drew up codes of laws and constitutions that formed the basis of the aristocratical and democratical governments to which we have alluded.

Among the most noted of these lawgivers were Lycurgus, to whom tradition assigns the framing of the Spartan constitution, and Solon and Cleisthenes, who established the democratical

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus tells how Amasis of Egypt, the friend and ally of the Tyrant, becoming alarmed at his extraordinary course of good fortune, wrote him, begging him to interrupt it and disarm the envy of the gods by sacrificing his most valued possession. Polycrates, acting upon the advice, threw into the sea a precious ring, which he highly prized; but soon afterwards the jewel was found by his servants in a fish that a fisherman had brought to the palace as a present for Polycrates. When Amasis heard of this, he at once broke off his alliance with the Tyrant, feeling sure that he was fated to suffer some terrible reverse of fortune. The event justified his worst fears.

constitution of Athens. Of these great lawgivers we shall have much to say in the following sections.

**The Founding of Colonies.** — This same age of political strife and of tyranny also coincides with the era of greatest activity in the founding of new colonies. Thousands, driven from their homes, like the Puritans in the time of the Stuart tyranny in England, fled over the seas, and, under the direction of the Delphian Apóllo, laid upon remote and widely separated shores the basis of "Dispersed Hellas." The overcrowding of population and the Greek love of enterprise and adventure, as well as civil dissensions, also contributed to swell the number of emigrants.<sup>1</sup>

During this colonizing era Southern Italy became so thickly set with Greek cities as to become known as *Magna Græcia*, "Great Greece." Here were founded during the latter part of the eighth century B.C. the important Dorian city of Tarentum; the wealthy and luxurious Æolian city of Sybaris (whence the term *Sybarite*, meaning a voluptuary); the great Croton, — the destroyer of Sybaris, — distinguished for its schools of philosophy and its victors in the Olympian games; and Rhegium, the mother of statesmen, historians, poets, and artists.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That Greek feeling of local patriotism of which we have already spoken (see p. 159) lent a peculiar character to Greek colonization. The Hellenic colonies, unlike those of modern times, were, as a rule, politically independent of the mother city. Each colony formed a distinct, self-governing state. Its relations to its mother city were simply those of filial piety, and of a common worship. This was symbolized by the embers which the emigrants carried with them from the hearth of the mother city, with which to kindle the altar fires of the new home.

Besides these independent colonies, however, which were united to the mother city by the ties of friendship and reverence alone, there was another class of colonies known as *kleruchies*. The settlers in these did not lose their rights of citizenship in the mother city, which retained full control of their affairs. Such settlements, however, were more properly garrisons than colonies, and were few in number, compared with the independent communities.

<sup>2</sup> Cumæ, famed throughout both the Grecian and the Roman world on account of its oracle and Sibyl, is said to have been founded as early as 1050 B.C.

Upon the island of Sicily was planted by the Dorian Corinth the city of Syracuse (734 B.C.), which, before Rome had become great, waged war on equal terms with Carthage. Here also were established the Dorian Agrigentum, — the scene of the incredible cruelties of the Tyrant Phalaris, — and a long list of large and flourishing colonies.

In the Gulf of Lyons was established about 600 B.C. the important Ionian city of Massalia (Marseilles), the radiating point of long routes of travel and trade.

On the African coast was founded the great Dorian city of Cyrene (630 B.C.), and probably about the same time was established in the Nile delta the city of Naucratis (see p. 29, *note*), through which the civilization of Egypt flowed into Greece.

The tide of emigration flowed not only to the west and south, but to the north as well. The northern shores of the *Ægean* and those of the Hellespont and the Propontis were fringed with colonies. The Argonautic terrors of the Black Sea were forgotten or unheeded, and even those remote shores received their emigrants. Many of the settlements in that quarter were established by the Ionian city of Miletus, which, swarming like a hive, became the mother of more than eighty colonies.

Through this wonderful colonizing movement Greece came to hold somewhat the same place in the ancient Mediterranean world that England as a colonizer occupies in the world of to-day. Many of these colonies not only reflected honor upon the mother-land through the just renown of their citizens, but through their singularly free, active, and progressive life, exerted upon her a most healthful and stimulating influence. The earliest poets, artists, and philosophers of Hellas were natives of the Asiatic or European colonial cities.

## II. THE GROWTH OF SPARTA.

**Gradual Rise of Sparta.** — Sparta was one of the cities of the Peloponnesus which owed their origin or importance to the











Dorian Invasion (see p. 168). It was situated in the deep valley of the Eurotas, in Laconia, and took its name Sparta (sown land) from the circumstance that it was built upon tillable ground, whereas the heart and centre of most Greek cities consisted of a lofty rock (the citadel, or acropolis). It was also called Lacedæmon, after an early legendary king.

At first, Sparta was overshadowed by the city of Argos, — since the return of the Heraclidæ, in Dorian hands, — but gradually she rose to the place of pre-eminence among all the cities of the peninsula. Her power was largely the outgrowth of her peculiar political constitution, one of the most remarkable ever framed by any state. It is this constitution, with which Sparta presents herself to us at the dawn of the historic period, that we must now examine.

**Classes in the Spartan State.** — In order to understand the social and political institutions of the Spartans, we must first notice the three classes — Spartans (Spartiatæ), Pericœci, and Helots — into which the population of Laconia was divided.

The Spartans proper were the descendants of the conquerors of the country, and were Dorian in race and language. They composed but a small fraction of the entire population. Their relations to the conquered people were those of an army of occupation. Sparta, their capital, was simply a vast camp, unprotected by any walls until later and degenerate times. The martial valor of its citizens was thought its only proper defence.

The Pericœci (dwellers around) who constituted the second class, were the subjugated Achæans. They were allowed to retain possession of their lands, but were forced to pay tribute, and, in times of war, to fight for the glory and interest of their Spartan masters.

The third and lowest class was composed of slaves, or serfs, called Helots. The larger number of these were laborers upon the estates of the Spartans. They were the property of the state, and not of the individual Spartan lords, among whom they were distributed by lot.

These Helots practically had no rights which their Spartan

masters felt bound to respect. If one of their number displayed unusual powers of body or mind, he was secretly assassinated, as it was deemed unsafe to allow such qualities to be fostered in this servile class. It is affirmed that when the Helots grew too numerous for the safety of the state, their numbers were thinned by a deliberate massacre of the surplus population.<sup>1</sup>

**Origin of the Spartan Institutions.**—The laws and customs of the Spartans have excited more interest, perhaps, than any similar institutions of the ancient world. A mystery and halo were thrown about them by their being attributed to the creative genius of a single lawgiver, Lycurgus.

But it is a proverb that constitutions grow, and are not made. Circumstances were the real creators of those strange institutions—the circumstances which surrounded a small band of conquerors in the midst of a large and subject population. Nor were they the creation of an hour—the fruit of a happy inspiration. All the events of the early conquest, all the toils, dangers, and hardships which the Dorian warriors endured in the subjugation of the land, and all the prudence and watchfulness necessary to the maintaining of themselves in the position of conquerors, helped to determine the unusual and harsh character of the laws and regulations of the Spartan state.

The work of Lycurgus, then, was not that of a new creation.

<sup>1</sup> In his history of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides makes the following statement: "Dreading the youth and number of their slaves, the Lacedæmonians, who have ever put in practice many precautions to curb and awe their Helots, made public proclamation, that so many of them as could claim the merit of having done signal services to the Lacedæmonians in the present war should enter their claims, and be rewarded with freedom. The view in this was, to sound them, it being thought that such as had the greatness of spirit to claim their freedom in requital of their merit, must be also the ripest for rebellion. About two thousand claimants were adjudged worthy of freedom, and accordingly were led about in solemn procession to the temple, crowned with garlands, as men honored with their liberty. But, in no long time after, they made away with them all; nor has the world been able to discover in what manner they were thus to a man destroyed."

Back of him lay a long period of growth and development. His labor was that of a wise and far-seeing statesman, whose work it is to "modify and shape already-existing habits and customs into rule and law"; to make additions and improvements; to anticipate growing tastes and tendencies. The very fact that the legislation of Lycurgus was adopted and became the system of a state, shows that it must have been simply the outgrowth of customs and regulations already familiar and consequently acceptable to at least a large party among the Spartans.

**The Legend of Lycurgus.** — Lycurgus, according to tradition, lived and did his work about the ninth century B.C. Many of the best years of his life were spent in exile. He is represented as acquainting himself with the laws and institutions of different lands, by converse with their priests and sages. He is said to have studied with great zeal the laws of Minos, the legendary lawgiver of the Cretans. Like the great legislator Moses, he became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Legend tells, too, how he journeyed as far as India, and became a disciple of the Brahmins.

The prime of life was almost passed when he returned to his native Sparta. So great was his reputation for learning and wisdom that he soon became the leader of a strong party. After much opposition, a system of laws and regulations drawn up by him was adopted by the Spartan people. Then, binding his countrymen by a solemn oath that they would carefully observe his laws during his absence, he set out on a pilgrimage to Delphi. In response to his inquiry, the oracle assured him that Sparta would endure and prosper as long as the people obeyed the laws he had given them. Lycurgus caused this answer to be carried to his countrymen; and then, that they might remain bound by the oath they had taken, he resolved never to return. He went into an unknown exile. Three lands claimed to hold his dust; and the Spartans in after years perpetuated his memory and their own gratitude by temples and sacrifices in his honor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The legend symbolizes the inviolability of the Constitution." — RANKE.

**The Kings, the Senate, and the Popular Assembly.** — The so-called Constitution of Lycurgus provided for two joint kings, a Senate of Elders, and a Popular Assembly.

The two kings corresponded in some respects to the two Consuls in the later Roman republic. One served as a check upon the other. This double sovereignty worked admirably; for five centuries there were no attempts on the part of the Spartan kings to subvert the constitution. The power of the joint kings, it should be added, was rather nominal than real (save in time of war); so that while the Spartan government was monarchical in form, it in reality was an aristocracy, the Spartans corresponding very closely to the feudal lords of Mediæval Europe.

The Senate (*gerousia*) consisted of twenty-eight elders. The two co-ordinate kings were also members, thus raising the number to thirty. This body existed long before the time of Lycurgus. He probably simply modified, or added to, its powers and duties. No one could become a member of this body until he had reached the age of sixty. The mode of election was peculiar. The committee who were to decide between the candidates were confined in a chamber near the public assembling-place, where, without seeing what was going on, they might hear the clamor of the people. Then the candidates were presented to the meeting, one by one, and the partisans of each greeted their favorite with great and prolonged applause. It was the duty of the committee to decide which candidate had been received with the greatest enthusiasm and clamor, and he was declared the people's choice. The proceedings in our own political conventions are not very dissimilar to this usage of the Spartan assembly.

The powers of the Senate were at first almost unlimited, extending to matters of life and death. After a time there was established the office of *ephor*. The ephors, who were five in number and elected by the Popular Assembly, gradually absorbed the powers and functions of the Senate, as well as the authority of the two associate kings.

The Popular Assembly was composed of all the citizens of

Sparta over thirty years of age. By this body laws were made, and questions of peace and war decided; but nothing could be brought before it save such matters as the Senate had previously decided might be entertained by it. It was by this assembly that the senators were elected in the manner above described.

In striking contrast to what was the custom at Athens, all matters were decided without debate. The Spartans were fighters, not talkers; they hated discussion. As in the case of the elections, the decision of the assembly respecting a measure was generally made known by acclamation. Sometimes, however, very important measures were decided by vote.

**Regulations as to Lands and Money.**—At the time of Lycurgus the lands of Laconia had become absorbed by the rich, leaving the masses in poverty and distress. It is certain that the lawgiver did much to remedy this ruinous state of affairs. Tradition says that all the lands were redistributed, an equal portion being assigned to each of the nine thousand Spartan citizens, and a smaller and less desirable portion to each of the thirty thousand Pericæci,—but it is not probable that there was any such exact equalization of property.

The Spartans were forbidden to engage in trade; all their time must be passed in the chase, or in gymnastic and martial exercise. Iron was made the sole money of the state. This, according to Plutarch, “was of great size and weight, and of small value, so that the equivalent for ten minæ (about \$140) required a great room for its stowage, and a yoke of oxen to draw it.” The object of this, he tells us, was to prevent its being used for the purchase of “foreign trumpery.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The real truth about this iron money is simply this: The conservative, non-trading Spartans retained longer than the other Grecian states the use of a primitive medium of exchange. Gold and silver money was not introduced into Sparta until about the close of the fifth century B.C., when the great expansion of her interests rendered a change in her money-system absolutely necessary. In referring the establishment of the early currency to Lycurgus, the Spartans simply did in this case just what they did in regard to their other usages.



**The Public Tables.** — The most peculiar, perhaps, of the Lycurgean institutions were the public meals (*syssitia*). In order to correct the extravagance with which the tables of the rich were often spread, Lycurgus ordered that all the Spartan citizens should eat at public and common tables. Each person was required to contribute to these a certain amount of flour, fruit, game, or pieces from the sacrifices; if any one failed to pay his contribution, he was degraded and disfranchised. Excepting the ephors, none, not even the kings, were excused from sitting at the common mess. One of the kings, returning from a long expedition, presumed to dine privately with his wife, but received therefor a severe reproof.

A luxury-loving Athenian, once visiting Sparta and seeing the coarse fare of the citizens, is reported to have declared that now he understood the Spartan disregard of life in battle. "Any one," said he, "must naturally prefer death to life on such fare as this."

**Education of the Youth.** — Children were considered as belonging to the state. Every infant was brought before the Council of Elders; and if it did not seem likely to become a robust and useful citizen, it was exposed in a mountain glen. At seven the education and training of the youth were committed to the charge of public officers, called boy-trainers. The aim of the entire course, as to the boys, was to make a nation of soldiers who should despise toil and danger and prefer death to military dishonor. The mind was cultivated only so far as might contribute to the main object of the system. Reading and writing were untaught, and the art of rhetoric was despised. Only martial poems were recited. The Spartans had a profound contempt for the subtleties and literary acquirements of the Athenians. Spartan brevity was a proverb, whence our word *laconic*,<sup>1</sup> implying a concise and pithy mode of expression. Boys were taught to respond in the fewest words possible. At the public tables they were not permitted to speak until questioned: they sat "silent as statues."

<sup>1</sup> From Laconia, the name of the district taken possession of by the Spartans.

As Plutarch puts it, "Lycurgus was for having the money bulky, heavy, and of little value ; and the language, on the contrary, very pithy and short, and a great deal of sense compressed in a few words."

But while the mind was neglected, the body was carefully trained. In leaping, wrestling, and in hurling the spear the Spartans acquired the most surprising nimbleness and dexterity.

But before all things else was the Spartan youth taught to bear pain unflinchingly. He was inured to the cold of winter by being forced to pass through that season with only the light dress of summer. His bed was a bundle of river reeds. Sometimes he was placed before the altar of Artemis, and scourged just for the purpose of accustoming his body to pain. Frequently, it is said, boys died under the lash, without betraying their suffering by look or moan.

Another custom tended to the same end as the foregoing usage. The boys were at times compelled to forage for their food. If detected, they were severely punished for having been so unskilful as not to get safely away with their booty. This custom, as well as the fortitude of the Spartan youth, is familiar to all through the story of the boy who, having stolen a young fox and concealed it beneath his tunic, allowed the animal to tear out his vitals, without betraying himself by the movement of a muscle.

The *Cryptia*, which has generally been represented as an organization of young Spartans who were allowed, as a means of rendering themselves ready and expert in war, to hunt and kill the Helots, seems in reality to have been a sort of police institution, designed to guard against uprisings of the serfs.

**Estimate of the Spartan Institutions.**—That the laws and regulations of the Spartan constitution were admirably adapted to the end in view, — the rearing of a nation of skilful and resolute warriors, — the long military supremacy of Sparta among the states of Greece abundantly attests. But when we consider the aim and object of the Spartan institutions, we must pronounce them low and unworthy. The true order of things was just reversed among

the Lacedæmonians. Government exists for the individual: at Sparta the individual lived for the state. The body is intended to be the instrument of the mind: the Spartans reversed this, and attended to the education of the mind only so far as its development enhanced the effectiveness of the body as a weapon in warfare.

Spartan history teaches how easy it is for a nation, like an individual, to misdirect its energies — to subordinate the higher to the lower. It illustrates, too, the fact that only those nations that labor to develop that which is best and highest in man make helpful contributions to the progress of the world. Sparta, in significant contrast to Athens, bequeathed nothing to posterity.

**The Messenian Wars.** — The most important event in Spartan history between the age of Lycurgus and the commencement of the Persian War was the long contest with Messenia, known as the First and Second Messenian wars (about 750–650 B.C.).

Messenia was one of the districts of the Peloponnesus which, like Laconia, had been taken possession of by the Dorians at the time of the great invasion. It was the most fertile of all the Dorian provinces. The Messenians were aided in the struggle by Argos and other Peloponnesian states, which were jealous of the rising power of Sparta.

It is told that the Spartans, in the second war, falling into despair, sent to Delphi for advice. The oracle directed them to ask Athens for a commander. The Athenians did not wish to aid the Lacedæmonians, yet dared not oppose the oracle. So they sent Tyrtaeus, a poet-schoolmaster, who they hoped and thought would prove of but little service to Sparta. Whatever truth there may be in this part of the story, it seems indisputable that, during the Second Messenian War, Tyrtaeus, an Attic poet, reanimated the drooping spirits of the Spartans by the energy of his martial strains. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that Sparta owed her final victory to the inspiring songs of this martial poet.

The conquered Messenians were reduced to serfdom, and their condition was made as degrading and bitter as that of the Helots

of Laconia. Many, choosing exile, pushed out into the western seas in search of new homes. Some of the fugitives founded Rhegium, in Italy; others, settling in Sicily, gave name and importance to the still existing city of Messena.

**Power of Sparta.** — After having secured possession of Messenia, Sparta conquered the southern part of Argolis, and thus gained control of a long strip of the eastern coast of the peninsula. All the southern portion of the Peloponnesus was now subject to her commands.

On the north, Sparta extended her power over many of the villages, or townships, of Arcadia; but her advance in this direction was at last checked by Tegea, a border town towards Laconia, and one of the few important Arcadian cities. Yet notwithstanding the Tegeans had successfully withstood the arms of Sparta, still they now (about 560 B.C.) entered into an alliance with her, and ever after remained her faithful friend and helper. This alliance was one of the main sources of Spartan preponderance in Greece during the next hundred years and more.

As the most powerful state in the Peloponnesus, Sparta now assumed the leadership of the sacred league that protected the shrine of Zeus at Olympia, and through the Pan-Hellenic games<sup>1</sup> there celebrated every four years (see p. 181), caused her fame to be spread even beyond the limits of Hellas. Cræsus, king of Lydia, sought an alliance with her in his unfortunate war with Persia, which just now was the rising power in Asia.

### III. THE GROWTH OF ATHENS.

**The Attic People.** — The population of Attica in historic times was essentially Ionian in race, but there were in it strains of other Hellenic stocks, besides some non-Hellenic elements as well. The earlier settlers of the plain, who were absorbed by later comers,

<sup>1</sup> That is, games open to all Hellenes; "Pan" is a Greek word (*παν*) meaning *all*.

were doubtless of Pelasgian race. This mixed origin of the population is believed to be one secret of the versatile yet well-balanced character which distinguished the Attic people above all other branches of the Hellenic family. It is not the absolutely pure, but the mixed races, like the English people, that have made the largest contributions to civilization.

**The Site of Athens.** — Four or five miles from the sea, a flat-topped rock, about one thousand feet in length and half as many in width, rises with abrupt cliffs, one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the plains of Attica. The security afforded by this eminence doubtless led to its selection as a stronghold by the early Attic settlers. Here a few buildings, perched upon the summit of the rock and surrounded by a palisade, constituted the beginning of the capital whose fame has spread over all the world.

**The Kings of Athens.** — When, in the seventh century B.C., the mists of antiquity clear away from the plain of Attica, Athens with an oligarchical government appears as the capital of the entire district. It is evident that back of this period stretches a long prehistoric development; but of the incidents of that early growth we are left in almost total ignorance. It is certain, however, that during the Heroic Age Athens was ruled by kings, like all the other Grecian cities. The names of Theseus and Codrus are the most noted of the regal line.

To Theseus, as we have seen (see p. 163), tradition ascribed the work of uniting the different Attic villages, or cantons, twelve in number, into a single city, on the seat of the ancient Cecropia (see p. 158). This prehistoric union, however or by whomsoever effected, laid the basis of the greatness of Athens.<sup>1</sup>

Respecting Codrus, the following legend is told: At one time the Dorians from the Peloponnesus invaded Attica. Codrus hav-

<sup>1</sup> "The consolidation of the Attic Demoi [*demes*, or townships] into a single state would answer to the gradual absorption of the several English kingdoms under the sovereignty of the chiefs of Wessex. In the one case, as in the other, the task was not accomplished in a day, nor without violent struggles." — Cox, *History of Greece*.

ing learned that an oracle had assured them of success if they spared the life of the Athenian king, disguised himself, and, with a single companion, made an attack upon some Spartan soldiers, who instantly slew him. Discovering that the king of Athens had fallen by a Lacedæmonian sword, the Spartans despaired of taking the city, and withdrew from the country.

**The Archons** (1050?–612 B.C.). — Codrus was the last king of Athens. His successor, elected by the nobles, was given simply the name of Archon, or Ruler, for the reason, it is said, that no one was thought worthy to bear the title of the divine Codrus.<sup>1</sup> The real truth is, that the nobles were transforming the Homeric monarchy into an oligarchy, and to effect the change were taking away from the king his royal powers.

At the outset there was but one Archon, elected for life from the family of Codrus; later, the term of office was limited to ten years, and, soon afterwards, the honor of election opened to all the nobles. Finally (in 683 B.C.) the number of Archons was increased to nine persons, chosen annually.

Thus during all this time the government was in the hands of the nobles; the people, that is, the free farmers and artisans, having no part in the management of public affairs. Throughout the early history of Athens there existed the same antagonism between these two orders that we shall hereafter find at Rome between the patricians and plebeians.

The people at length demanded additional rights and privileges and a voice in the government, or at least protection from the exactions and cruelties of the wealthy.

**The Laws of Draco** (about 620 B.C.). — To meet these demands, the nobles appointed one of their own number, Draco, to prepare a code of laws. He reduced existing customs and regulations to a definite and written constitution, assigning to the smallest offence the penalty of death. This cruel severity of the Draco-

<sup>1</sup> The title *basileus* (king), notwithstanding the legend, seems never to have been dropped entirely. It was borne by one of the nine Archons (there were finally nine), with functions of a priestly character.



nian laws caused Demades to say of them that "they were written, not in ink, but in blood." But for their harshness Draco was not responsible: he did not make them; their severity was simply a reflection of the harshness of those early times. Some think, however, that they were made thus severe, in order to overawe and punish the people for having dared to demand them of the nobles. Draco himself is said to have thought all violation of law to be sin against the gods, and that "the least offences deserve death."

**The Rebellion of Cylon** (612 B.C.). — Soon after the enactment of Draco's laws, which naturally served only to increase the discontent of the people, Cylon, a rich and ambitious noble, taking advantage of the state of affairs, attempted to overthrow the government and make himself supreme. He seized the citadel of the Acropolis, where he was closely besieged by the Archons. Upon the rock stood a temple of Athena. Finally, hard pressed, the companions of Cylon — he himself had escaped through the lines of his enemies — sought refuge within the shrine. The Archon Megacles, fearing lest the death of the rebels by starvation within the sacred enclosure should pollute the sanctuary, offered to spare their lives on condition of surrender. Fearing to trust themselves among their enemies without some protection, they fastened a string to the statue of Athena, and holding fast to this, descended from the citadel, into the streets of Athens. As they came in front of the altars of the Furies, the line broke; and Megacles, professing to believe that this mischance indicated that the goddess refused to shield them longer, caused them to be set upon and massacred.

It illustrates the superstition, or, as we should rather say, the deep religious feelings of those times, to note the effects of this act upon the course of following events. The friends of Cylon easily persuaded the people that the fierce anger of the avenging Furies had been incurred by the slaughter of prisoners in violation of a sacred oath and before their very altars. Calamities that now befell the state confirmed the belief. Thus the people were inflamed still more against the government of the aristocracy. They demanded and finally secured the banishment of the Alcmae-

onidæ, the family to which Megacles belonged. Even the bones of the dead of the family were dug up, and carried beyond the frontiers of the state. The people further insisted upon a fresh revision of the laws and a share in the government.

**The Laws of Solon** (594 B.C.).—Solon, a man held in great esteem by all classes on account of recent distinguished services to the state, was chosen to draw up a new code of laws. He repealed many of the cruel laws of Draco; permitted the return of those driven into exile; gave relief to the debtor class, especially to the poor farmers, whose little plots were covered with mortgages, by reducing the value of the money in which they would have to make payment; ordered those held in slavery for debt to be set free;<sup>1</sup> and cancelled all fines payable to the state. These measures caused contentment and prosperity to take the place, everywhere throughout Attica, of previous discontent and wretchedness.

**Changes in the Athenian Constitution.**—The changes wrought by Solon in the political constitution of Athens were equally wise and beneficent. He divided all the citizens of Athens into four classes, according to their income. Only members of the first class could hold the office of Archon; and only those of the first three classes were eligible to the Council of Elders; but every member of all the classes had the right to vote in the popular assembly.

Thus property instead of birth was made the basis of political rights. This completely changed the character of the government: it was no longer an exclusive oligarchy.

A council known as the Council of the Four Hundred, one hundred for each tribe, was created by Solon. Its chief duties were to decide what matters might be discussed by the public assembly, and to execute the resolutions of that body.

**The Tribunal of the Areopagus.**—Solon also enlarged the

<sup>1</sup> After Solon's legislation no Athenian was ever sold for debt. His laws respecting debtors "may perhaps be regarded," says Ranke, "as one of the first steps in history toward the recognition of human dignity."

jurisdiction of the celebrated Tribunal of the Areopagus, a venerable council that from time out of memory had been held on Mars' Hill, near the Acropolis. He ordained that no one should become a member of it in the future who had not held the office of Archon, and that all Ex-Archons should have a seat in it. The judges sat beneath the open sky, that they might not be contaminated, it is said, by the breath of the criminals brought before them. To this court was committed the care of morals and religion. It was in the presence of this venerable tribunal that, about six hundred years after the legislation of Solon, Paul stood when he made his eloquent defence of Christianity. (See Acts xvii. 22-32.)

**The Public Assembly.**—The public assembly (*ecclesia*), under the constitution of Solon, was made the most important of all the institutions of the state. It was the fountain of all power. It appointed the Archons and elected the members of the Senate of Four Hundred. Contrary to the rule in Sparta, any citizen had the right not only of voting, but of speaking on any question which the assembly had a right to discuss. Six thousand citizens were required to constitute a quorum to transact business in cases of special importance. This popular assembly grew into vast importance in later times. By it were discussed and decided questions affecting the entire Hellenic world.

These laws and institutions of Solon laid the basis of the Athenian democracy.

**The Tyrant Pisistratus** (560-527 B.C.). Solon had the unspeakable misfortune of living to see his institutions used to set up a tyranny, by an ambitious kinsman, his nephew Pisistratus. This man courted popular favor, and called himself the "friend of the people." One day, having inflicted many wounds upon himself, he drove his chariot hastily into the public square, and pretended that he had been thus set upon by the nobles, because of his devotion to the people's cause. The people, moved with sympathy and indignation, voted him a guard of fifty men. Under cover of raising this company, Pisistratus gathered a much larger force, seized

the Acropolis, and made himself master of Athens. Though twice expelled from the city, he as often returned, and finally succeeded in getting a permanent hold of the government.

The rule of the usurper was mild, and under him Athens enjoyed a period of great prosperity. He adorned the city with temples and other splendid buildings, and constructed great aqueducts. Just beyond the city walls, he laid out the Lyceum, a sort of public park, made inviting with groves, porches, and promenades, which became in after years the favorite resort of the philosophers and poets of Athens. He was a liberal patron of literature; and his library—the first gathered at Athens—was generously thrown open to the public. He also caused the Homeric poems to be collected and edited.

Pisistratus died 527 B.C., thirty-three years after his first seizure of the citadel. Solon himself said of him that he had no vice save ambition.

**Expulsion of the Tyrants from Athens (510 B.C.).**—The two sons of Pisistratus, Hippias and Hipparchus, succeeded to his power. At first they emulated the example of their father, and Athens flourished under their parental rule. But at length an unfortunate event gave an entirely different tone to the government. Hipparchus, having insulted a young noble, was assassinated. Hippias escaped harm, but the event caused him to become suspicious and severe. His rule now became a tyranny indeed, and was brought to an end in the following way.

After his last return to Athens, Pisistratus had sent the "accursed" Alcæonidæ into a second exile. During this period of banishment an opportunity arose for them to efface the stain of sacrilege which was still supposed to cling to them on account of the old crime of Megacles (see p. 202). The temple at Delphi having been destroyed by fire, they contracted with the Amphiclyons to rebuild it. They not only completed the work in the most honorable manner throughout, but even went so far beyond the terms of their contract as to use beautiful Parian marble for the front of the temple, when only common stone was required by the specifications.

By this act — a pious and generous one, had it only been wholly disinterested — the exiled family won to such a degree the favor of the priests of the sacred college, that they were able to influence the utterances of the oracle. The invariable answer now of the Pythia to Spartan inquirers at the shrine was, "Athens must be set free."

Moved at last by the repeated injunctions of the oracle, the Spartans resolved to drive Hippias from Athens. Their first attempt was unsuccessful; but in a second, made in connection with the Alcmaeonidæ headed by Cleisthenes, they were so fortunate as to capture the two children of Hippias, who, to secure their release, agreed to leave the city (510 B.C.). He retired to Asia Minor, and spent the rest of his life, as we shall learn hereafter, seeking aid in different quarters to re-establish his tyranny in Athens. The Athenians passed a decree of perpetual exile against him and all his family.

**The Reforms of Cleisthenes** (509 B.C.). — Straightway upon the expulsion of the Tyrant Hippias, there arose a great strife between the people, who of course wished to organize the government in accord with the constitution of Solon, and the nobles, who desired to re-establish the old aristocratical rule. Cleisthenes, aristocrat though he was, espoused the cause of the popular party. Through his influence several important changes in the constitution, which rendered it still more democratical than under Solon, were now effected.

In place of the four so-called Ionian *tribes*, into which all the citizens of Athens up to this time had been divided, Cleisthenes formed ten new tribes, which included *all the free inhabitants of Attica*.<sup>1</sup> Thus no matter in what province or hamlet of Attica a man's home might be, if he were not a slave, he was a citizen of Athens, and had the right to vote in the popular assembly, and to enjoy all the other privileges of Athenian citizenship.

<sup>1</sup> Aside from enlarging them by the admission of the new-made citizens, Cleisthenes did not disturb the four *classes* into which Solon had divided the citizens of Athens. The duties and privileges of these classes (eligibility to the archonship, etc.) remained as before. See p. 203.

This, notwithstanding the retention of the old *classes* of Solon, made such a radical change in the constitution in the interest of the masses, that Cleisthenes rather than Solon is regarded by many as the real founder of the Athenian democracy.

The ten tribes, which were really geographical divisions of Attica, were each made up of a number of widely separated townships, or *demes*, of which there were at first probably one hundred. Each township contained a hamlet or village, possessed its own magistrates, and managed its local affairs.

The Senate was remodelled in accordance with the new divisions of the state. It had consisted of four hundred members, one hundred from each of the ancient tribes. It was now made up of five hundred members, fifty from each of the new tribes. Its duties and powers, as well as those of the popular assembly, were greatly increased, while those of the Archons and of the aristocratical court of the Areopagus were correspondingly diminished. Many cases hitherto tried by these bodies were hereafter decided by citizen juries. Thus all the citizens of the state were accustomed not only to the management of political affairs, but were trained in the exercise of judicial functions.

The command of the military forces was intrusted to ten generals (*strategi*), one for each of the new tribes. The supreme command was held by each of the ten generals in turn, for one day only at a time.

**Ostracism.** — But of all the innovations or institutions of Cleisthenes, that known as *ostracism* was the most characteristic, if not the most important. By means of this process any person who had excited the suspicions or displeasure of the people could, without trial, be banished from Athens for a period of ten years. Six thousand votes cast against any person in a meeting of the popular assembly was a decree of banishment. The name of the person whose banishment was sought was written on a piece of pottery or a shell (in Greek *ostrakon*), hence the term *ostracism*.

The original design of this institution was to prevent the recurrence of such a usurpation as that of the Pisistratidæ. The priv-



ilege and power it gave the people were oftēn abused, and many of the ablest and best statesmen of Athens were sent into exile through the influence of some demagogue who for the moment had caught the popular ear.

No stigma or disgrace attached to the person ostracized. The vote came to be employed, as a rule, simply to settle disputes between rival leaders of political parties, and, when thus used, was designed to put an end to dangerous contentions of powerful factions in the state. Thus the vote merely expressed political preference, the ostracized person being simply the defeated candidate for popular favor.

The institution was short-lived. It was resorted to for the last time during the Peloponnesian War (417 B.C.). The people then, in a freak, ostracized a man whom all admitted to be the meanest man in Athens. This was regarded as such a degradation of the institution, as well as such an honor to the mean man, that never thereafter did the Athenians degrade a good man, or honor a bad one, by a resort to the measure.

**Sparta opposes the Athenian Democracy.** — The aristocratic party at Athens was naturally bitterly opposed to all these democratic innovations. The Spartans, also, viewed with disquiet and jealousy this rapid growth of the Athenian democracy, and their King Cleomenes, instigated by Isagoras, the leader of the Athenian nobles, made two unsuccessful invasions of Attica, for the purpose of overthrowing the Athenian government. In the second of these, the Spartans had as allies north of the Isthmus the cities of Thebes and Chalcis, the latter a town upon the island of Eubœa.

After the withdrawal from Attica of the Peloponnesian forces, the Athenians chastised the Thebans for giving aid to the Spartans; and then crossing the channel to Eubœa, captured Chalcis, took away from the Chalcidians their lands, and distributed them by lot among four thousand Attic farmers.

These colonists were not ordinary emigrants; they did not cease to be citizens of Athens. In a word, the part of the island thus

settled became simply an addition to Attic territory. This was the first of that class of colonies which we have already described under the name *kleruchies* (see p. 189, note). It proved of vast service to Athens.

Cleomenes now thought to secure his object through Hippias. Inviting the deposed Tyrant over from Asia, he called at Sparta a convention of all her Peloponnesian allies, and tried to persuade them to aid the Spartans in restoring Hippias to power in Athens. But the eloquent portrayal by the Corinthian deputy Sosicles, of the wrongs Corinth had endured at the hands of the Tyrant Periander, and his scathing rebuke of Sparta's inconsistency in overthrowing tyrannies elsewhere and then trying to set one up in Athens, caused all the allies to refuse to lend any aid to the proposed undertaking, so that Cleomenes was forced to abandon it.

Hippias now withdrew once more to Asia Minor, and we soon find him at the court of King Darius, seeking aid of the Persians. His solicitations, in connection with an affront which the Athenians just now offered the king himself by aiding his revolted subjects in Ionia, led directly up to the memorable struggle known as the Græco-Persian Wars.



GREEK WARRIORS PREPARING FOR BATTLE.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE GRÆCO-PERSIAN WARS.

(500-479 B.C.)

**Expeditions of Darius against Greece.** — In narrating the history of the Persians, we have already told how Darius, after having subdued the revolt of his Ionian subjects in Asia Minor, turned his armaments against Eretria and Athens, to punish these cities for the part they had taken in the capture and burning of Sardis. We have seen how ill-fated was his first expedition, which was led by his son-in-law Mardonius — the army being cut almost to pieces in Thrace by the fierce native tribes, and the fleet being shattered by heavy seas off the stormy promontory of Mount Athos (see p. 140).

Undismayed by the disaster that had befallen the expedition of Mardonius, Darius issued orders for the raising and equipping of another and stronger armament. Meanwhile he sent heralds to the various Grecian states to demand earth and water, which elements among the Persians were symbols of submission. The weaker states gave the tokens required; but the Athenians and Spartans threw the envoys of the king into pits and wells, and bade

them help themselves to earth and water. By the beginning of the year 490 B.C., another Persian army of 120,000 men had been mustered for the second attempt upon Greece. This armament was intrusted to the command of the experienced generals Datis and Artaphernes; but was under the guidance of the traitor Hippias. A fleet of six hundred ships bore the army from the coasts of Asia Minor over the Ægean towards the Grecian shores.

After receiving the submission of the most important of the Cyclades, and capturing and sacking the city of Eretria upon the island of Eubœa, the Persians landed at Marathon, barely two days' journey from Athens. Here is a sheltered bay, which is edged by a crescent-shaped plain, backed by the rugged ranges of Parnes and Pentelicus. Upon this level ground the Persian generals drew up their army, flushed and confident with their recent successes.

**The Battle of Marathon** (490 B.C.).—The Athenians were nerved by the very magnitude of the danger to almost superhuman energy. Slaves were transformed into soldiers by the promise of liberty. A fleet runner, Phidippides by name, was despatched to Sparta for aid. In just thirty-six hours he was in Sparta, which is one hundred and fifty miles from Athens. But it so happened that it lacked a few days of the full moon, during which interval the Spartans, owing to an old superstition, were averse to setting out upon a military expedition. They promised aid, but moved only in time to reach Athens when all was over. The Plateæans, firm and grateful friends of the Athenians, on account of some former service, no sooner received the latter's appeal for help than they responded to a man.

The Athenians and their faithful allies, numbering about ten thousand in all, under the command of Miltiades, were drawn up in battle array just where the hills of Pentelicus sink down into the plain of Marathon. The vast host of the Persians filled the level ground in their front. The fate of Greece and the future of Europe were in the keeping of Miltiades and his trusty warriors. Without waiting for the attack of the Persians, the Greeks charged

and swept like a tempest from the mountain over the plain, pushed the Persians back towards the shore, and with great slaughter drove them to their ships.

Miltiades at once despatched a courier to Athens with intelligence of his victory. The messenger reached the city in a few hours, but in so breathless a state that, as the people thronged eagerly around him to hear the news he bore, he could merely gasp, "Victory is ours," and fell dead.

But the danger was not yet past. The Persian fleet, instead of returning to the coast of Asia, bore down upon Athens. Informed by watchers on the hills of the movements of the enemy, Miltiades immediately set out with his little army for the capital, which he reached just at evening, the battle at Marathon having been won in the forenoon of that same day. The next morning, when the Persian generals would have made an attack upon the city, they found themselves confronted by the same men who but yesterday had beaten them back from the plains of Marathon. Shrinking from another encounter with these citizen-soldiers of Athens, the Persians spread their sails, and bore away towards the Ionian shore.

Thus the cloud that had lowered so threateningly over Hellas was for a time dissipated. The most imposing honors were accorded to the heroes who had achieved the glorious victory, and their names and deeds were transmitted to posterity, in song and marble. The bodies of the one hundred and ninety-two Athenians who had fallen, were buried on the field, and an enormous mound of earth was raised over them. Ten marble columns surmounting the tumulus bore the names of the heroes through more than six centuries.

The gods were believed to have interposed in behalf of Greece ; and suitable recognition of their favor was made in gifts and memorials. A considerable part of the brazen arms and shields gathered from the battle-field was melted into a colossal statue of Athena, which was placed upon the Acropolis, as the guardian of Athens. Tradition also says that, in after years, the grateful

Athenians ordered their great sculptor Phidias to cut the block of marble which the confident Persians had brought with them to set up as a monument of their anticipated victory, into a statue of Nemesis, the goddess who punishes the proud and insolent.

**Results of the Battle of Marathon.** — The battle of Marathon is reckoned as one of the “decisive battles of the world.” It marks an epoch, not only in the life of Greece, but in that of Europe. Hellenic civilization was spared to mature its fruit, not for itself alone, but for the world. The battle decided that no longer the despotism of the East, with its repression of all individual action, but the freedom of the West, with all its incentives to personal effort, should control the affairs and mould the ideas and institutions of the future. It broke the spell of the Persian name, and destroyed forever the prestige of the Persian arms. It gave the Hellenic peoples that position of authority and pre-eminence that had been so long enjoyed by the successive races of the East. It especially revealed the Athenians to themselves. The consciousness of resources and power became the inspiration of their future acts. They performed great deeds thereafter because they believed themselves able to perform them. ✓

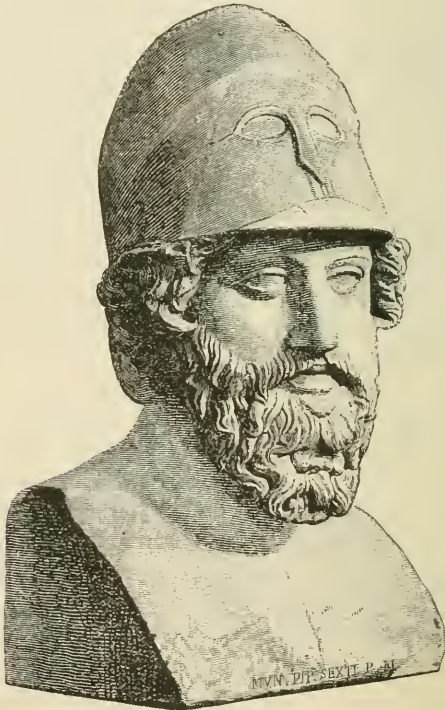
**Miltiades falls into Disgrace.** — The distinguished services Miltiades had rendered his country, made him the hero of the hour at Athens. Taking advantage of the public feeling in his favor, he persuaded the Athenians to put in his hands a fleet for an enterprise respecting the nature of which no one save himself was to know anything whatever. Of course it was generally supposed that he meditated an attack upon the Persians or their allies, and with full faith in the judgment as well as in the integrity of their favorite, the Athenians gave him the command he asked.

But Miltiades abused the confidence imposed in him. He led the expedition against the island of Paros, simply to avenge some private wrong. The undertaking was unsuccessful, and Miltiades, severely wounded, returned to Athens, where he was brought to trial for his conduct. His never-to-be-forgotten services at Marathon pleaded eloquently for him, and he escaped being sentenced



to death, but was subjected to a heavy fine. This he was unable to pay, and in a short time he died of his wound. The unfortunate affair left an ineffaceable blot upon a fame otherwise the most resplendent in Grecian story.

**Athens prepares for Persian Vengeance.**— Many among the Athenians were inclined to believe that the battle of Marathon



THEMISTOCLES.

had freed Athens forever from the danger of a Persian invasion. But there was at least one among them who was clear-sighted enough to see that that battle was only the beginning of a great struggle. This was Themistocles, a sagacious, versatile, and

ambitious statesman, who labored to persuade the Athenians to strengthen their navy, in order to be ready to meet the danger he foresaw.

Themistocles was opposed in this policy by Aristides, called the Just, a man of the most scrupulous integrity, who feared that Athens would make a serious mistake if she converted her land force into a naval armament. The contention grew so sharp between them that the ostracism was called into use to decide the matter. Six thousand votes were cast against Aristides, and he was sent into exile.

It is related that while the vote that ostracized him was being taken in the popular assembly, an illiterate peasant, who was a stranger to Aristides, asked him to write the name of Aristides upon his tablet. As he placed the name desired upon the shell, the statesman asked the man what wrong Aristides had ever done him. "None," responded the voter; "I do not even know him; but I am tired of hearing him called the Just."

After the banishment of Aristides, Themistocles was free to carry out his naval policy without any serious opposition, and soon Athens had the largest fleet of any Greek city, with a splendid harbor at Piræus.

**Xerxes' Preparations to invade Greece.** — No sooner had the news of the disaster at Marathon been carried to Darius than he began to make gigantic preparations to avenge this second defeat and insult. It was in the midst of these plans for revenge that, as we have already learned, death cut short his reign, and his son Xerxes came to the throne (see p. 141).

Urged on by his nobles, as well as by exiled Greeks at his court, who sought to gratify ambition or enjoy revenge in the humiliation and ruin of their native land, Xerxes, though at first disinclined to enter into a contest with the Greeks, at length ordered the preparations begun by his father to be pushed forward with the utmost energy. For eight years all Asia resounded with the din of preparation. Levies were made upon all the provinces that acknowledged the authority of the Great King, from India to the

Hellespont. Vast contingents of vessels were furnished by the coast countries of the Mediterranean. Immense stores of provisions, the harvests of many years, were gathered into great store-houses along the intended line of march.

While all these preparations were going on in Asia itself, Phœnician and Egyptian architects were employed in spanning the Hellespont with a double bridge of boats, which was to unite the two continents as with a royal highway. At the same time, the isthmus at Mount Athos, in rounding which promontory the admirals of Mardonius had lost their fleet, was cut by a canal, traces of which may be seen at this day. Three years were consumed in these gigantic works. With them completed, or far advanced, Xerxes set out from his capital to join the countless hosts that from all quarters of the compass were gathering at Sardis, in Asia Minor.

**Disunion of the Greeks: Congress at Corinth (481 B.C.).**— Startling rumors of the gigantic preparations that the Persian king was making to crush them were constantly borne across the Ægean to the ears of the Greeks in Europe. Finally came intelligence that Xerxes was about to begin his march. Something must now be done to meet the impending danger. Mainly through the exertions of Themistocles, a council of the Greek cities was convened at Corinth in the fall of 481 B.C.

But on account of feuds, jealousies, and party spirit, only a small number of the states of Hellas could be brought to act in concert. Argos would not join the proposed confederation through hatred of Sparta; Thebes, through jealousy of Athens. The Cretans, to whom an embassy had been sent soliciting aid, refused all assistance. The Corcyræans promised to help, but they were not sincere. Gelon, the Tyrant of Syracuse, offered to send over a large armament, provided that he were given the chief command of the allied forces. His aid on such terms was refused.

Thus, through different causes, many of the Greek cities held aloof from the confederation, so that only about fifteen or sixteen states were brought to unite their resources against the Barbarians;

and even the strength of many of those cities that did enter into the alliance was divided by party spirit. The friends of aristocratical government were almost invariably friends of Persia, because a Persian victory in Greece proper meant what it had already meant in Ionia, — a suppression of the democracies as incompatible with the Persian form of government. Thus for the sake of a party victory, the aristocrats were ready to betray their country into the hands of the Barbarians. To make their conduct appear less outrageous to the common Hellenic mind, some of these so-called “Medizing<sup>1</sup> Greeks” even tried to make out that the Persians were the descendants of the Greek hero Perseus, and hence pure Hellenes, submission to whom could not be regarded as disgraceful.

Furthermore, the Delphian oracle, aristocratical in its sympathies, and therefore influenced by the same considerations that had weight with the oligarchical party, was lukewarm and wavering, if not actually disloyal, and by its timid responses disheartened the patriot party.

But under the inspiration of Themistocles the cities in convention at Corinth determined upon desperate resistance to the Barbarians. They resolved that all feuds existing between members of the league should be extinguished, and solemnly bound themselves, after the struggle should be over, to make war together upon any and every city that should give aid to the Persians, and to dedicate one-tenth of the spoils to the shrine of the Delphian Apollo.

Passing at last to the consideration of the question where they should make their first stand against the invaders, it was at first decided to concentrate a strong force in the Vale of Tempe, and at that point to dispute the advance of the enemy; but this being found impracticable, it was resolved that the first attempt to resist the Persian march should be made at the pass of Thermopylæ.

The Spartans were given the chief command of both the land

<sup>1</sup> The reference, of course, is to the Medes, by which term the Greeks usually designated the Persians.

and the naval forces. The Athenians might fairly have insisted upon their right to the command of the allied fleet, but under the inspiration of Themistocles, they patriotically waived their claim for the sake of harmony.

**The Hellespontine Bridges Broken.** — As the vast army of Xerxes was about to move from Sardis, intelligence came that the bridges across the Hellespont had been wrecked by a violent tempest. It is said that Xerxes, in great wrath, ordered the architects to be put to death, and the sea to be bound with fetters and scourged. The scourgers faithfully performed their duty, at the same time gratuitously cursing the traitorous and rebellious Hellespont with what Herodotus calls “non-Hellenic and blasphemous terms.”

Other architects spanned the channel with two stronger and firmer bridges. Each roadway rested upon a row of from three to four hundred vessels, all securely anchored like modern pontoons. The bridges were each about one mile in length, and furnished with high parapets, that the horses and cattle might not be rendered uneasy at sight of the water.

**Passage of the Hellespont.** — With the first indications of the opening spring of 480 B.C., just ten years after the defeat at Marathon, the vast Persian army was astir and concentrating from all points upon the Hellespont. The passage of this strait, as pictured to us in the inimitable narration of Herodotus, is one of the most dramatic of all the spectacles afforded by history.

Before the passage commenced, the bridges were strewn with the sacred myrtle and perfumed with incense from golden censers, while the sea was placated with libations poured by the king himself. As the east reddened with the approach of the sun, prayers were offered, and the moment the rays of Helios touched the bridges the passage began. To avoid accidents and delays, the trains of baggage wagons and the beasts of burden crossed by one causeway, leaving the other free for the march of the army. The first of the host to cross were the sacred guard of the Great King, the Ten Thousand Immortals, all crowned with garlands as in festival

procession. Preceding the king, moved slowly the gorgeous Chariot of the Sun, drawn by eight milk-white steeds. Herodotus affirms that for seven days and seven nights the bridges groaned beneath the living tide that Asia was pouring into Europe.

**The Review and Census.** — Upon an extended plain called Doriscus, on the European shore, Xerxes drew up his vast army for review and census. It was the largest armament that the world had yet gathered for any enterprise. To Herodotus it seemed that all Asia and Africa were there seeking the ruin of Greece. Forty-six different nations marched beneath the ensign of the Persian king. The costumes and equipments of the different contingents were as varied as the countries whence they came. There was every variety of dress, from the light cotton tunic of the native of India to the leopard-skin in which the Ethiopian wrapped his body. Some were clad in bronze armor; others offered their naked bodies to the blows of the enemy. The weapons borne varied from the well-tempered blade of Damascus to the fire-hardened stave of the Libyan. Some of the nomadic horsemen were armed simply with the lasso.

The countless host could be numbered in no usual way. Ten thousand men were crowded in as close a body as possible and a low wall raised about them. Then these passed out of the enclosure, which was again packed with soldiers, and when no more could find room, it was calculated that ten thousand were within. One hundred and seventy times was the enclosure thus filled and emptied. According to this rude enumeration, the land force of Xerxes amounted to 1,700,000 men. The naval force brought the number up to the amazing total of 2,317,000. Herodotus adds to this about an equal number of slaves and attendants, making the entire host number between five and six million persons. It is believed that these figures are greatly exaggerated, and that the actual number of the Persian army could not have exceeded 900,000 men.

**Provisioning the Persian Army.** — From the plain of Doriscus the Persian army moved on towards the Pass of Thermopylæ.



The cities along the route had been ordered to prepare repasts for the army as it advanced, and to furnish special delicacies for the royal table. The people, through policy or fear, made extraordinary efforts to entertain in a becoming manner their self-imposed guest, and to feed his soldiers. Herodotus affirms, and there seems no reason to doubt his statement, that some of the towns were driven to distraction, and others to the very verge of ruin. The people, however, notwithstanding their perplexity and distress, found occasion to thank the gods because Xerxes, according to the Persian custom, required but one meal a day. "Had the monarch required breakfast as well as dinner," says Herodotus, "the citizens must have been reduced to the alternative either of exile or of utter destitution."

**Battle of Thermopylæ** (480 B.C.). — Leading from Thessaly into Central Greece is a narrow pass, pressed on one side by the sea and on the other by rugged mountain ridges. At the foot of the cliffs break forth several hot springs, whence the name of the pass, Thermopylæ, or "Hot Gates."

At this point, in accordance with the decision of the Corinthian Congress, was offered the first resistance to the progress of the Persian army. Leonidas, king of Sparta, with three hundred Spartan soldiers and about six thousand allies from different states of Greece, held the pass. As the Greeks were about to celebrate the Olympian games, which their religious scruples would not allow them to postpone, they left this handful of men unsupported to hold in check the army of Xerxes until the festival days were past.<sup>1</sup>

By a special interposition of the gods, as it seemed to the pious Greeks, a furious tempest drove the Persian fleet upon the shore and dashed to pieces over four hundred ships. This prevented Xerxes from landing a force farther down the coast, in the rear

<sup>1</sup> Grote likens the action of the Greeks at this time to that of the Jews, who, when Jerusalem was being besieged by the Romans under Titus, rather than violate their religious scruples, permitted the Roman works to be pushed forward against their city during the Sabbath, without molestation.

of Leonidas ; for that movement was now hindered by a Grecian fleet of sixty thousand men, which, encouraged by the Persian losses, had advanced to Artemisium, at the extreme northern point of the island of Eubœa.

The Spartans could now be driven from their advantageous position, only by an attack in front. Before assaulting them, Xerxes summoned them to give up their arms. The answer of Leonidas was, "Come and take them."

For two days the Persians tried to storm the pass. The Asiatics were driven to the attack by their officers armed with whips. But every attempt to force the way was repulsed ; even the Ten Thousand Immortals were hurled back from the Spartan front like waves from a cliff.

But an act of treachery on the part of a native Greek rendered unavailing all the bravery of the keepers of the pass. A by-way leading over the mountains to the rear of the Spartans was revealed to Xerxes. The startling intelligence was brought to Leonidas that the Persians were descending the mountain path in his rear. He saw instantly that all was lost. The allies were permitted to seek safety in flight while opportunity remained. But to him and his Spartan companions there could be no thought of retreat. Death in the pass, the defence of which had been intrusted to them, was all that Spartan honor and Spartan law now left them. The next day, surrounded by the Persian host, they fought with desperate valor ; but, being overwhelmed finally by mere numbers, they were slain to the last man. With them also perished seven hundred Thespians who had chosen death with their companions. Over the bodies of the Spartan soldiers a monument was afterwards erected with this inscription : "Stranger, tell the Lacedæmonians that we lie here in obedience to their orders."

**The Battle of Artemisium.** — While Leonidas and his companions were so gallantly striving to hold in check the land forces of Xerxes at the Pass of Thermopylæ, the Greek fleet at Artemisium, consisting of between two and three hundred ships, was

endeavoring with equal bravery to prevent the immense fleet of the Persians from entering the strait which runs between the island of Eubœa and the mainland. During the three days that the struggle was going on at the pass, the Grecian ships were engaging the Persian naval forces, with indecisive results ; but when on the evening of the third day the Greeks received intelligence of the loss of the pass, they withdrew from before the enemy, as there was now nothing to be gained by holding the water passage any longer. The whole armament came to anchor in the Gulf of Salamis, near Athens, and awaited events.

**The Burning of Athens.** — Athens now lay open to the invaders. The inhabitants of the Peloponnesus, thinking of their own safety simply, commenced throwing up defences across the narrow isthmus of Corinth, working day and night under the impulse of an almost insane fear. Athens was thus left outside to care for herself.

Counsels were divided. The Delphian oracle had obscurely declared, "When everything else in the land of Cecrops shall be taken, Zeus grants to Athena that the *wooden walls* alone shall remain unconquered, to defend you and your children." The oracle was believed to be, as was declared, "firm as adamant." But there were various opinions as to what was meant by the "wooden walls." Some thought the Pythian priestess directed the Athenians to seek refuge in the forests on the mountains ; others believed the oracle meant the wooden palisade which in ancient times surrounded the Acropolis ; but Themistocles (who it is thought may have himself prompted the oracle) contended that the ships were plainly indicated.

The last interpretation was acted upon. All the soldiers of Attica were crowded upon the vessels of the fleet at Salamis. The aged men, with the women and children, were carried out of the country to different places of safety. All the towns of Attica, with the capital, were thus abandoned to the conquerors.

A few days afterwards the Persians entered upon the deserted plain, which they rendered more desolate by ravaging the fields

and burning the empty towns. Athens shared the common fate, and her splendid temples sank in flames. Sardis was avenged. The joy in distant Susa was unbounded.

**The Naval Battle of Salamis** (480 B.C.). — Just off the coast of Attica, separated from the mainland by a narrow passage of water, lies the island of Salamis. Here lay the Greek fleet. The persuasive eloquence alone of Themistocles brought the Greeks to the determination to face here the Persian squadrons. To hasten on the Persian attack before dissensions should divide the Greek forces, Themistocles resorted to the following stratagem. He sent a messenger to Xerxes representing that he himself was ready to espouse the Persian cause, and advised an immediate attack upon the Athenian fleet, which he represented as being in no condition to make any formidable resistance. Xerxes was deceived. He ordered an immediate attack. From a lofty throne upon the shore he himself overlooked the scene and watched the result. The Persian fleet was broken to pieces and two hundred of the ships destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

The blow was decisive. Xerxes lost faith in his undertaking and in his allies. He feared that **treachery** might burn or break the Hellespontine bridges, and thus endanger his own safety. He instantly despatched a hundred ships to protect them; and then, leaving Mardonius with three hundred thousand men to retrieve the disaster of Salamis, and effect, as he promised to do, the conquest of the rest of Greece, the monarch set out on his ignominious retreat to Asia.<sup>2</sup>

**The Battles of Plataea and Mycale** (479 B.C.). — The next year the Persian fleet and army thus left behind in Europe were entirely destroyed, both on the same day — the army at Plataea, near

<sup>1</sup> The entire Persian fleet numbered about seven hundred and fifty vessels; the Grecian, about three hundred and eighty-five ships, mostly triremes.

<sup>2</sup> On the very day of the battle of Salamis, Gelon of Syracuse gained a great victory over the Carthaginians at the battle of Himera, in the north of Sicily. So it was a memorable day for Hellas in the West as well as in the East.

Thebes, by the combined Greek forces under the Spartan Pausanias; and the fleet, including the Asiatic land forces, at Mycale, on the Ionian coast.

The battles of Salamis, Plataea, and Mycale were the successive blows that shattered into fragments the most splendid armaments ever commanded by Asiatic despot.

**Memorials and Trophies of the War.** — The glorious issue of the war caused a general burst of joy and exultation throughout all Greece. Poets and artists and orators all vied with one another in commemorating the deeds of the heroes whose valor had warded off the impending danger.

Nor did the pious Grecians think that the marvellous deliverance had been effected without the intervention of the gods in their behalf. To the temple at Delphi was gratefully consecrated a tenth of the immense spoils in gold and silver from the field of Plataea; and within the sanctuary of Athena, upon the Acropolis at Athens, were placed the broken cables of the Hellespontine bridges, at once a proud trophy of victory, and a signal illustration of the divine punishment that had befallen the audacious and impious attempt to lay a yoke upon the sacred waters of the Hellespont.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PERIOD OF ATHENIAN SUPREMACY.

(479-431 B.C.)

**Loyalty of Athens to the Grecian Cause.** — Athens had braved everything for the common cause of Hellas. The patriotism of her citizens had never wavered. When Mardonius sought with bribes to detach them from the Grecian league, they replied to his messenger that “no conceivable temptation, either of money or territory, should induce them to desert the ties of brotherhood, common language, or religion.”

Their lofty patriotism and unswerving loyalty to the general interests of Greece — in striking contrast to the narrow selfishness of the Spartans — were now rewarded. Athens was accorded the place of honor and pre-eminence among the Grecian states. The loss and suffering entailed by the destruction of her dwellings and temples were repaired and forgotten during the period of prosperity upon which she now entered. Her maritime power, and her reputation as a center of wealth and refinement and the home of art and literature, were secured by the address and genius of a succession of statesmen, artists, and writers such as perhaps no other city in ancient or modern times ever produced. The important public events that fill the period intervening between the battle of Plataea and the breaking out of the Peloponnesian War (479-431 B.C.) will be found, as we now proceed to narrate them in the very briefest way, to connect themselves especially with four names of the widest renown — Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles.

**Rebuilding the Walls of Athens.** — After the Persians had been expelled from Greece, the first care of the Athenians was the



rebuilding of their homes. Their next task was the restoration of the city walls. The exalted hopes for the future which had been raised by the almost incredible achievements and endurance of the past few months, led the Athenians to draw a vast circuit of seven miles about the Acropolis as the line of the new ramparts.

The rival states of the Peloponnesus watched the proceedings of the Athenians with the most jealous interest. While they could not but admire Athens, they feared her. Sparta sent an embassy to dissuade the citizens from rebuilding the walls, hypocritically assigning as the cause of her interest in the matter her solicitude lest, in case of another Persian invasion, the city, if captured, might become a shelter and defence to the enemy.

**Themistocles as an Envoy.** — The crafty Themistocles, the Ulysses of Athens, and the most popular leader of his time, had a talent for just such diplomacy as the case seemed to demand ; for the Athenians were not strong enough to insist by force of arms upon their right to manage their own affairs. Themistocles caused the Spartan envoys to be sent home with the reply that Athens would send commissioners to Sparta to consider the matter with them there. Then, as one of the envoys, he himself set out for Sparta, having previously arranged that the other members of the embassy should not leave Athens until the walls were sufficiently advanced to defy assault. With astonishing unanimity and energy, the entire population of Athens, rich and poor, men, women, and children, set to work upon the walls. Material was torn from temples and tombs and built into the defences.

While this was going on at Athens, Themistocles was at Sparta, with amazing address wondering with the Lacedæmonians what so delayed his colleagues. From day to day the business upon which he had come was postponed, to give time for the arrival of the tardy envoys. At length rumors came to Sparta of the state of affairs at Athens. Themistocles assured the people that these were mere idle reports. Fresh rumors came. Then he advised them to send messengers of their own to Athens to get the truth of the matter. They did so. But Themistocles had already de-

spatched a messenger to the Athenians informing them that the Spartan envoys were on the way, and ordering their detention in Athens.

By all these stratagems sufficient time was gained to raise the walls to such a height that the Athenians could defy interference. Then Themistocles boldly administered some "wholesome advice to the Spartans. He told them, when they and their allies sent ambassadors again to Athens, to deal with the Athenians as with reasonable men, who could discern what belonged to their own interest, and what to the general interest of Greece."

These circumstances attendant upon the refortifying of the Athenian capital we have narrated at some length, because of the light they throw upon the succeeding history of Athens. They exhibit the tremendous energy with which the memory of the recent great events of the Persian War inspired the Athenians. As Grote observes, both arm and mind were strung to the very highest pitch. It was this tension, calling forth the very best in every man, that carried forward events at Athens with such almost preternatural energy during the generation immediately following that great struggle.

This contention respecting the walls of Athens also affords us a glimpse of the rising jealousy between Sparta and Athens, which at last, intensified by their different political tendencies, issued in that long and calamitous struggle between these two rival states and their allies, known as the Peloponnesian War.

**Naval Policy of the Athenians.** — Eminent as was the service which Themistocles had rendered his native city in the conduct of the Spartan negotiations, he now conferred a still greater benefit by the exercise of his prudence and genius in the shaping of the naval policy of the ambitious Athenians.

This far-sighted statesman saw clearly that Athens' supremacy among the Grecian states must be secured and maintained by her mastery of the sea. He had unbounded visions of the maritime power and glory that might come to her through her fleet, those "wooden walls" to which at this moment she owed her very exist-

ence; and he succeeded in inspiring his countrymen with his own enthusiasm and sanguine hopes.

In the prosecution of his views, Themistocles persuaded the Athenians to enlarge the harbor of Piræus, the most spacious of the three ports of Athens, and to surround the place with immense walls, far exceeding, both in compass and strength, those of the capital. He also led his countrymen to the resolution of adding each year twenty well-equipped triremes to their navy.

This policy, initiated by Themistocles, was, as we shall see, zealously pursued by the statesmen, that after him successively assumed the lead in Athenian affairs.

**Character of Themistocles.** — Themistocles well deserved the honor of being called, as he was, the founder of the New Athens. But although a great and far-seeing statesman, to whose commanding ability both in war and in peace Athens owed almost everything, still those imperfections of character which we cannot have failed to notice, at last brought him into disgrace. He used unscrupulously the power and position which his abilities and services secured him. He accepted bribes and sold his influence, thereby acquiring an enormous property. Finally he was ostracized and went into exile (471 B.C.). After long wanderings, he became a resident at the court of the Persian king.

Tradition affirms that Artaxerxes, in accordance with Persian usage, provided for the courtier exile by assigning to three cities in Asia Minor the care of providing for his table: one furnished bread, a second meat, and a third wines. It is told that one day, as he sat down to his richly loaded board, he exclaimed, "How much we should have lost, my children, if we had not been ruined!" He died about 449 B.C.

**Aristides the Just.** — The most illustrious contemporary and rival of Themistocles was Aristides, to whom reference has already been made (see p. 215). Less great in mind than Themistocles, he was immeasurably his superior in character. Before the time of which we are treating, he had already rendered many and eminent services to his native state. He was one of the ten Athenian

generals that led the Grecian forces at Marathon. Not long after that battle, his rival, Themistocles, as we have narrated, secured against him a decree of ostracism.

With a spirit just the opposite of that evinced by the Roman Camillus, who, when banished by his countrymen, invoked the gods to send such calamities upon them that they would speedily pray for his return, the patriot Aristides went into exile praying the gods that nothing might befall his native city which should cause those that had procured his banishment to mourn his absence. Nevertheless, such an event soon did occur. Only six years had passed when the threatening danger of the invasion by Xerxes led to his recall by the Athenians, to aid Themistocles in the defence of the state. He fought at Salamis and Plataea, and, after the retreat of the Persians, became at Athens the rival of Themistocles in popular favor and esteem. It was the universal confidence inspired by his uprightness of character that enabled him to secure for his native city that supremacy in the foreign affairs of Hellas which had been hitherto accorded to Sparta alone. How this came about will appear in the following paragraphs.

**The Confederacy of Delos** (477 B.C.).—In order that they might be able to carry on war more effectively against the Persians,—who for a long time after the disastrous expedition of Xerxes never ceased, by intrigue and open force, to vex the Grecian communities,—the Ionian states of Asia Minor, the islands of the Ægean, and some of the states in Greece proper, mostly north of the Isthmus, shortly after the battle of Plataea, formed themselves into what is known as the Confederacy of Delos. Sparta, on account of her military reputation, had hitherto been accorded the place of pre-eminence and authority in all such alliances of the Hellenic cities. She had come, indeed, to regard herself as the natural guardian and leader of Greece. But at this time the unbearable arrogance of the Spartan general Pausanias,<sup>1</sup> who presumed

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias was not only arrogant, but treacherous. It came to light afterward that he was at that moment engaged in treasonable negotiations with

upon the great reputation he had gained at the battle of Plataea, led the states which had entered into the alliance to look to Athens to assume the position of leadership in the new confederacy.

The lofty character of Aristides, who was now the most prominent Athenian leader, and his great reputation for fairness and incorruptible integrity, also contributed to the same result. He was chosen the first president of the league (477 B.C.), and the sacred island of Delos was made the repository of the common funds. What proportion of the ships and money needed for carrying out the purposes of the union should be contributed by the different states, was left entirely to the decision of Aristides, such was the confidence all had in his equity; and so long as he had control of the matter, none of the members of the alliance ever had cause of complaint.

Thus did Sparta lose, and Athens gain, the place of precedence among the Ionian states. The Dorian states of the Peloponnesus, in the main, still looked to Sparta as their leader and adviser. All Greece was thus divided into two great leagues, under the rival leadership of Sparta and Athens.

**The Athenians convert the Delian League into an Empire.** — The Confederacy of Delos laid the basis of the imperial power of Athens. The Athenians misused their authority as leaders of the league, and gradually, during the interval between the formation of the union and the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, reduced their free and independent confederates to the condition of tributaries.

Xerxes, and was ready, for a suitable reward, to surrender all Greece into the hands of the Persians. The well-known letter in which he is made to seek as the price of his treachery the hand of the daughter of Xerxes is, it is true, by some pronounced a forgery; but then there is no doubt of his treasonable intentions. His fate befitted his crime. To avoid arrest by the ephors, he fled for refuge to the sanctuary of Athena at Sparta. The ephors, not daring to seize him there, caused the roof of the temple to be removed, and walling up the entrance, left the traitor to die of starvation.

Athens transformed the league into an empire in the following manner. The contributions assessed by Aristides upon the different members of the confederation, consisted of ships and their crews for the larger states, and of money payments for the smaller ones. From the first, Athens attended to this assessment matter, and saw to it that each member of the league made its proper contribution.

After a while, some of the cities preferring to make a money payment in lieu of ships, Athens accepted the commutation, and then building the ships herself, added them to her own navy. Thus the confederates disarmed themselves and armed their master.

Very soon the restraints which Athens imposed upon her allies became irksome, and they began to refuse, one after another, to pay the assessment in any form. Naxos, one of the Cyclades, was the first island to secede, as it were, from the league (466 B.C.). But Athens had no idea of admitting any such doctrine of state rights, and with her powerful navy forced the Naxians to remain within the union, and to pay an increased tribute.

What happened in the case of Naxos happened in the case of almost all the other members of the confederation. By the year 449 B.C. only three of the island members of the league still retained their independence.

Even before this date (probably about 457 B.C.) the Athenians had transferred the common treasury from Delos to Athens, and diverting the tribute from its original purpose, were beginning to spend it, not in the prosecution of war against the Barbarians, but in the execution of home enterprises, as though the treasure were their own revenue.

Thus what had been simply a voluntary confederation of sovereign and independent cities, was converted into what was practically an absolute monarchy, with the Attic democracy as the imperial master.

What made this servitude of the former allies of Athens all the more galling was the fact that they themselves had been com-



pelled to forge the very chains which fettered them ; for it was their money that had built and was maintaining the fleet by which they were kept in subjection and forced to do whatever might be the will of the Athenians.

**The Leadership of Cimon.** — One of the ablest and most distinguished of the generals who commanded the forces of the Athenians during this same period when they were enslaving their confederates, was Cimon, the son of Miltiades. He was one of those whose spirits had been fired by the exciting events attendant upon the Persian invasion. He had called attention to himself and acquired a certain reputation, at the time of the abandonment of Athens, by being the first to hang up his bridle in the sanctuary of the Acropolis, thus expressing his resolution to place all his confidence in the fleet, as Themistocles advised.

After the expulsion of the Persians from Greece, he became one of the most successful of the Grecian generals to whom was intrusted the command of the armaments designed to wrest from the hands of the enemy the islands of the Ægean and the Hellenic cities of the Asiatic coast.

The rich spoils of his many victories over the Persians, the most important of which was that at the mouth of the Eurymedon, in Pamphylia (465 B.C.), enabled him to fill the treasury of Athens, and also to build up an ample fortune for himself. His private means he dispensed with a lavish hand in benefactions to the poor, in the erection of magnificent public buildings, and in the beautifying of the public walks and parks of Athens. The Academy, the favorite resort of the Athenians, owed much of its beauty to his munificence.

One of the most interesting ceremonies in which he took a leading part was the removal of what was declared to be the bones of the national hero Theseus from the island of Scyros, where the exiled king is fabled to have died, to a place of entombment at Athens. Over the sacred relics was erected a magnificent temple, which some archæologists believe to be identical with the remarkably well-preserved building near the Areopagus, known as the Theseum.

**Revolt of the Helots ; Cimon's Loss of Favor.** — The popularity of Cimon at last declined, and he suffered ostracism, as had Aristides and Themistocles before him.

Cimon's loss of public favor came about in this manner. In the year 464 B.C., a terrible earthquake destroyed a large portion of Sparta, and buried a vast number of the inhabitants beneath the ruins of their city. In the panic of the appalling disaster the Spartans were led to believe that the evil had befallen them as a punishment for their recent violation of the Temple of Poseidon, from which some Helots who had fled to the sanctuary for refuge had been torn. The Helots, on their part, were quick to interpret the event as an intervention of the gods in their behalf, and as an unmistakable signal for their uprising. Everywhere they flew to arms, and, being joined by some of the Pericæci, furiously attacked their masters. The Spartans, after maintaining the bitter struggle for several years, finding themselves unable to reduce their former slaves to submission, were forced to ask aid of the other Grecian states.

The great Athenian statesman Pericles implored his countrymen not to lend themselves to the building up of the power of their rival. But the aristocratic Cimon, who had always entertained the most friendly feelings for the Spartans, exhorted the Athenians to put aside all sentiments of enmity or jealousy, and to extend succor to their kinsmen in this desperate posture of their affairs. "Let not Greece," said he, "be lamed, and thus Athens herself be deprived of her yokefellow." The great services Cimon had rendered the state entitled him to be heard. The assembly voted as he advised, and so the Athenian forces fought for some time side by side with the Lacedæmonians.

But the Spartans were distrustful of the sincerity of their allies, and this feeling gradually grew into positive fear lest the Athenians should take advantage of their position in the country and pass over to the side of the Helots. Acting under this apprehension, which was probably entirely groundless, they dismissed the Athenian forces. The discourtesy of the act aroused the most bitter

resentment at Athens. The party of Pericles, which had always opposed the resolution of aiding their rivals as impolitic and weakly sentimental, took advantage of the exasperated feelings of the people to effect some important changes in the constitution in favor of the people, which made it almost purely democratical in character,<sup>1</sup> and to secure the exercise of the ostracism against Cimon as the leader of the aristocratical party and the friend of Sparta (459 B.C.).

*The Age of Pericles (459-431 B.C.).*

**General Features of the Age.** — Under the inspiration of Pericles, the Athenian state now entered upon the most brilliant period of its history. The epoch embraces less than the lifetime of a single generation, yet its influence upon the civilization of the world can hardly be overrated. During this short period Athens gave birth to more great men — poets, artists, statesmen, and philosophers — than all the world besides has produced in any period of equal length.

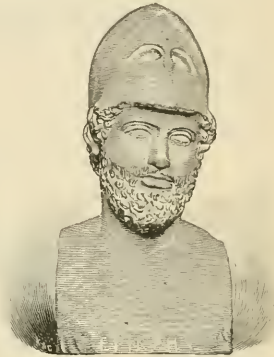
Among all the great men of this age, Pericles stood pre-eminent. Such was the impression left by his commanding statesmanship, his persuasive eloquence, and his almost universal genius, upon the period in which he lived, that it is called after him the Periclean Age.<sup>2</sup> Yet though Pericles' power at Athens was almost absolute,

<sup>1</sup> These reforms were as follows: The court of the Areopagus, the stronghold of the aristocracy, was stripped of most of its censorial powers, which, with its judicial functions, were conferred upon courts (called *dicasteries*) each composed of five hundred citizens. This change transferred the most important functions of the state from an aristocratical body to the people at large. The senate of five hundred was also deprived of the greater part of its judicial powers. Ephialtes, the friend and supporter of Pericles, further caused the tablets of Solon's laws, which had been kept upon the Acropolis, to be brought down into the agora, as a symbol of the fact that the preservation and maintenance of the constitution was now intrusted to the people.

<sup>2</sup> This phrase is often loosely applied to the entire period of Athenian supremacy.

still this authority was simply that which talent and character justly confer. He ruled, as Plutarch says, by the art of persuasion.<sup>1</sup>

During the Periclean period the Athenian democracy was supreme. The democratic constitution, the basis of which had been laid by Solon and broadened by Cleisthenes, was completed by the reforms to which we have already referred (see p. 234, note). Every matter that concerned the empire was discussed and decided by the popular assembly. Never before had any people enjoyed such perfect political liberty as did the citizens of Athens at this time, and never before were any people, through so intimate a knowledge of public affairs, so well able to direct the policies of state. Every citizen, it is affirmed, was qualified to hold civil office.



PERICLES.

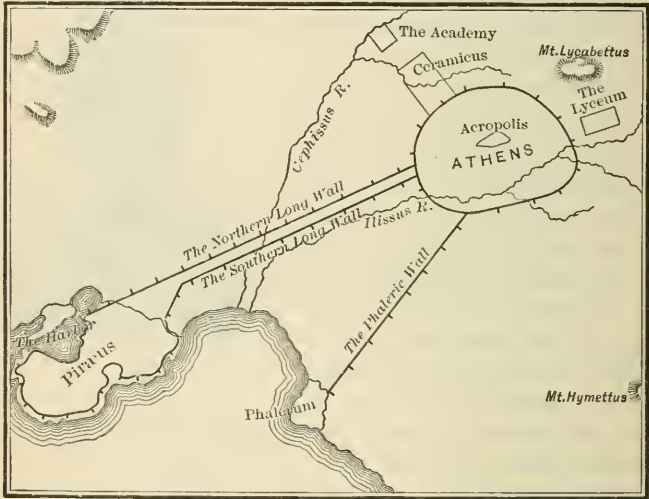
**Pericles fosters the Naval Power of Athens.** — Cimon's policy had been to keep the Grecian cities united in order that they might offer effectual resistance to the Persian power. The aim of his rival Pericles was to maintain Athens as the leading state in Hellas, and to oppose the pretensions of Sparta. Accordingly he encouraged the Athenians to strengthen their naval armament and to perfect themselves in naval discipline, for with Themistocles he was convinced that Athens' supremacy must depend chiefly upon her fleet.

As a part of his maritime policy, Pericles persuaded the Athenians to build what were known as the Long Walls<sup>2</sup> (about 457-

<sup>1</sup> The only offices he held were those of strategus (see p. 207), Superintendent of Public Works, and Superintendent of the Finances.

<sup>2</sup> The Long Walls were each between four and five miles in length, and

455 B.C.), which united Athens to the ports of Piræus and Phalerum. Later (445 B.C.), as a double security, a third wall was built parallel to the one running to the former harbor. By means of these great ramparts Athens and her ports, with the intervening land, were converted into a vast fortified district, capable in time



ATHENS AND THE LONG WALLS.

of war of holding the entire population of Attica. With her communication with the sea thus secured, and with a powerful navy at her command, Athens could bid defiance to her foes on sea and land.

One of the most important conquests of the Athenians during Pericles' leadership, in its bearing upon their maritime supremacy, was the subjugation of the island of Ægina, which lies in front of sixty feet high. They were defended by numerous towers, which, when Athens became crowded, were used as shops and private dwellings. The walls were employed as highways, the top being wide enough to allow two chariots to pass conveniently. The foundation of the northern wall now forms in part the road-bed of the railroad running from Piræus to Athens.

the harbor of Piræus. This small but powerful state, which had for a long time been a formidable rival of Athens by sea, was now compelled to surrender its war galleys, and to pay tribute (456 B.C.).

**Events leading up to the Thirty Years' Truce.** — At the same time that Pericles was making Athens' supremacy by sea more secure, he was endeavoring to build up for her a land empire in Central Greece. As her influence in this quarter increased, Sparta became more and more jealous, and strove to counteract it by enhancing the power of Thebes, and by lending support to the aristocratic party in the various cities of Bœotia.

The contest between the two rivals was long and bitter. At first the Athenians were worsted, but at length the tide turned in their favor. All the cities of Bœotia, Phocis, and Locris fell under the power of Athens, and it seemed as though Pericles' dream of a land empire as well as of a naval dominion was about to be realized.

But fortune once more inclined to the side of the aristocratical party. The Athenian army experienced an overwhelming defeat (at Coronea, 447 B.C.), and Pericles was fain to seek peace with Sparta. The negotiations ended in the well-known Peace of Pericles, or the Thirty Years' Truce (445 B.C.). By its terms each of the rival cities was left at the head of the confederation it had formed, but neither was to interfere with the subjects or allies of the other, while those cities of Hellas which were not yet members of either league were to be left free to join either according to choice.

The real meaning of the Truce was that Athens gave up her ambition to establish a land empire, and was henceforth to be content with supremacy on the seas. It meant further that Greece was to remain a house divided against itself; that democratic Athens must share with aristocratic Sparta the hegemony, or leadership, of the Hellenic cities.

**Pericles adorns Athens with Public Buildings.** — Notwithstanding Pericles' failure to build up for Athens a land dominion,



still he had contributed largely to give her a place of proud pre-eminence in maritime Hellas. Athens having achieved such a position as she now held, it was the idea of Pericles that the Athenians should so adorn their city that it should be a fitting symbol of the power and glory of their empire.

Nor was it difficult for him to persuade his art-loving countrymen to embellish their city with those masterpieces of genius that in their ruins still excite the admiration of the world.

Upon the commanding site of the Acropolis was erected the unrivalled Parthenon.<sup>1</sup> Here also, as a sort of gateway to the sacred enclosure of the citadel, were erected the Propylæa, which have served as a model for all similar structures since the age of Pericles. Various other edifices, rich with sculptures, were erected in different parts of Athens, until the whole city took on a surprisingly brilliant and magnificent appearance. The whole world looked up to the Attic city with the same surprised wonder with which a century before it had regarded the city of Babylon as adorned by the power and wealth of the great Nebuchadnezzar.

The Athenians secured the vast sums of money needed for the prosecution of their great architectural works, out of the treasury of the Delian confederacy. (It will be recalled that the Athenians had transferred the common treasury from Delos to their own city.) The allies naturally declaimed bitterly against this proceeding, complaining that Athens, with their money, was "gilding itself as a proud and vain woman decks herself out with jewels." But Pericles' answer to them was, that the money was contributed to the end that the cities of the league should be protected from the Persians, and that so long as the Athenians kept the enemy at a distance they had a right to use the money as they pleased.

**The Citizens are taken into the Pay of the State.** — It was a fixed idea of Pericles that in a democracy there should be not only an equal distribution of political rights among all classes, but also an equalization of the means and opportunities of exercising these

<sup>1</sup> See p. 289.

rights, as well as an equal participation by all in social and intellectual enjoyments. By such an equalization of the privileges and pleasures of political and social life, he would destroy the undue influence of the rich over the poor, and banish class envy and discord.

In promoting his views Pericles carried to great length the system of payment for the most common public services. Thus, he introduced the custom of military pay; hitherto the Athenian soldier had served his country in the field as a matter of honor and duty. He also secured the payment of the citizen for serving as a jurymen, as well as for his attendance upon the meetings of the popular assembly. Through his influence, also, salaries were attached to the various civil offices, the most of which had hitherto been unpaid positions.

These various measures enabled the poorer citizens to enjoy, without an inconvenient sacrifice, their franchise in the popular assembly, and to offer themselves for the different magistracies, which up to this time had been practically open only to men of means and leisure.

It was the same motives that prompted the above innovation, which led the party of Pericles to introduce or to extend the practice of supplying all the citizens with free tickets to the theatre and other places of amusement, and of banqueting the people on festival days at the public expense. Respecting the effect of these measures upon the Athenian democracy, we shall say a word in the following paragraph.

**Strength and Weakness of the Athenian Empire.**—Under Pericles Athens had become the most powerful naval state in the world. In one of his last speeches, made at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, in which he recounts the resources of the Athenian empire, he says to his fellow-citizens: "There is not now a king, there is not any nation in the universal world, able to withstand that navy which at this juncture you can launch out to sea."

And this was no empty boast. The earlier empires of the East

that had once held dominion over wide countries had now sunk into decrepitude, and the later Medo-Persian power that had arisen upon their ruins, and which at the opening of the fifth century B.C. was threatening to extend its arms over the world, had been checked in its insolent advance by Hellenic valor and discipline, so that at this time there was no power in the East that the Athenians need fear. In the West, Rome had not yet risen into prominence, and Carthage was barely able to contend upon equal terms with the Greek cities of Sicily. Indisputably the Hellenes were at this moment the predominant race in the world; and Athens, notwithstanding the limitations placed upon her ambition by the terms of the 'Thirty Years' Truce, was the real head of Hellas. She had extended her dominion over a large part of the Greek cities, and it was but natural that the more sanguine of her statesmen should believe that she was destined to give laws to the world.

But the most significant feature of this new imperial power was the combination of these vast material resources with the most imposing display of intellectual resources that the world had ever witnessed. Never before had there been such a union of the material and intellectual elements of civilization at the seat of empire. Literature and art had been carried to the utmost perfection possible to human genius. Art was represented by the inimitable creations of Phidias and Polygnotus. The Drama was illustrated by the incomparable tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and by the comedies of Aristophanes, while the writing of the world's annals had become an art in the graceful narrations of Herodotus.

But there were elements of weakness in the splendid imperial structure. The Athenian empire was destined to be short-lived because the principles upon which it rested were in opposition to the deepest instinct of the Greek race — the sentiment of local patriotism, which invested each individual city with political sovereignty. Athens had disregarded this feeling. Pericles himself acknowledged that in the hands of the Athenians, sovereignty had run out

into a sort of tyranny. The so-called confederates were the slaves of Athens. To her they paid tribute. To her courts they were dragged for trial.<sup>1</sup> Naturally the subject cities of her empire regarded Athens as the destroyer of Hellenic liberties, and watched impatiently for the first favorable moment to revolt, and throw off the hateful yoke that she had imposed upon them. Hence the Athenian empire rested upon a foundation of sand.

Had Athens, instead of enslaving her confederates of the Delian league, only been able to find out some way of retaining them as allies in an equal union, — a great and perhaps impossible task in that age of the world, — as head of the federated Greek race, she might have secured for Hellas the sovereignty of the Mediterranean, and the history of Rome might have ended with the first century of the Republic.

Furthermore, there were elements of weakness within the Athenian democracy itself. Greatly as Pericles had exalted Athens, and vastly as he had extended her reputation, still by some of his measures he had sown the seeds of future evils. In his system of payment for the most common public services, and of wholesale public largesses and gratuities, he had introduced or encouraged practices that had the same demoralizing effects upon the Athenians that the free distribution of corn at Rome at a later time had upon the Roman populace. These pernicious customs cast discredit upon labor, destroyed frugality, and fostered idleness, thus sapping the virtues and strength of the Athenian democracy.

Illustrations of these weaknesses, as well as of the strength of the Athenian empire, will be afforded by the great struggle between Athens and Sparta known as the Peloponnesian War, the causes and chief incidents of which we shall next rehearse.

<sup>1</sup> The subject cities were allowed to maintain only their lower courts of justice; all cases of importance were carried to Athens, and there decided by the Attic tribunals.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR: THE SPARTAN AND THE  
THEBAN SUPREMACY.

## I. THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR (431-404 B.C.).

**Causes of the War.** — During the closing years of the life of Pericles the growing jealousy between Athens and Sparta broke out in the long struggle known as the Peloponnesian War, to which we alluded in the preceding chapter. Pericles had foreseen the coming storm: "I descry war," said he, "lowering from the Peloponnesus." He saw clearly that the jealousies and opposing principles of the two rival states would, sooner or later, in spite of truces and treaties, bring them to a final trial of strength. His whole later policy looked toward the preparation of Athens for the "irrepressible conflict."

The immediate causes of the war were, first, the interference of Athens, on the side of the Corcyræans, in a quarrel between them and their mother-city Corinth; and secondly, the blockade by the Athenians of Potidæa, on the Macedonian coast. This was a Corinthian colony, but it was a member of the Delian league, and was now being chastised by Athens for attempted secession. Corinth, as the ever-jealous naval rival of Athens, had endeavored to lend aid to her daughter, but had been worsted in an engagement with the Athenians.

With affairs in this shape, Corinth, seconded by Megara and Ægina, both of which had causes of complaint against Athens, appealed to Sparta, as the head of the Dorian alliance, for aid and justice. The Spartans, after listening to the deputies of both



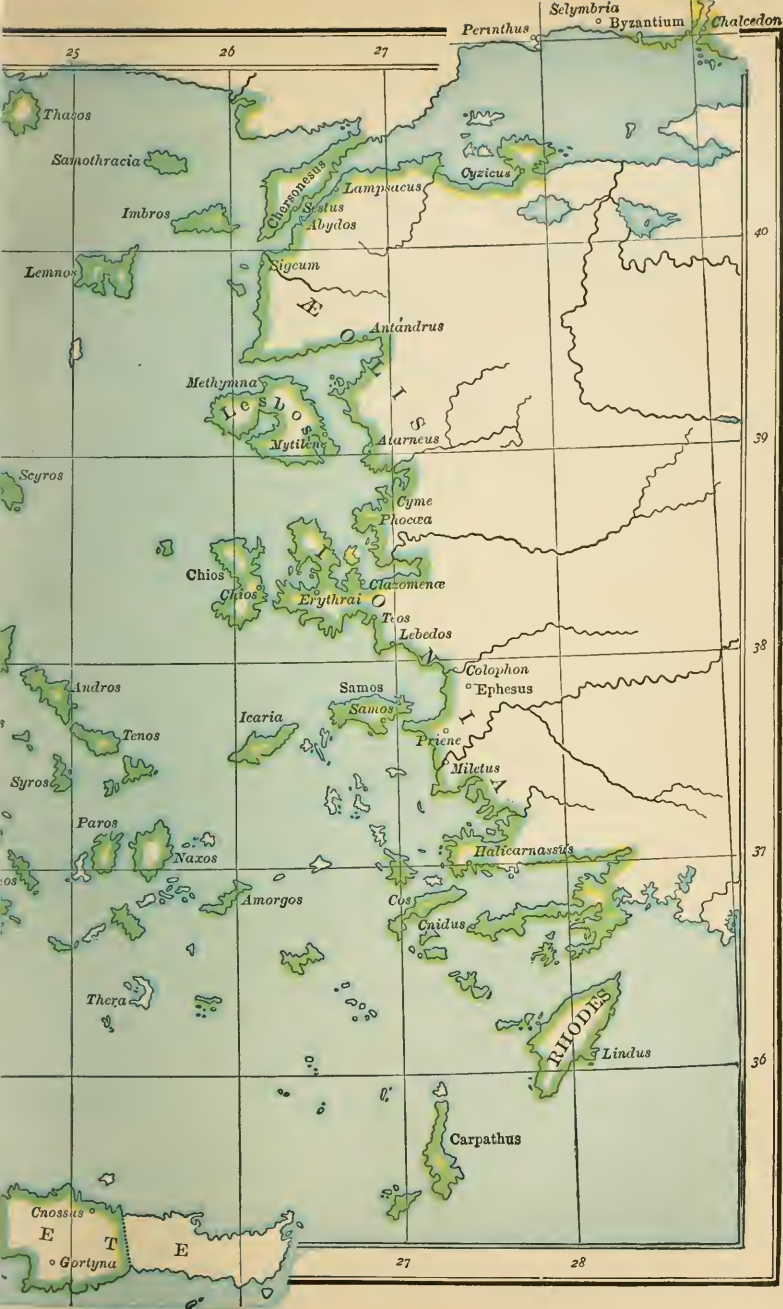




**GREECE**  
 in the  
**Fifth Century B.C.**

*Lacedæmonian Possessions & Allies*

*Athenian Possessions & Allies*





sides, decided that the Athenians had been guilty of injustice, and declared for war. The resolution of the Spartans was endorsed by the Peloponnesian confederation, and apparently approved by the Delphian oracle, which, in response to an inquiry of the Spartans as to what would be the issue of the proposed undertaking, assured them that "they would gain the victory, if they fought with all their might."

**Comparison of the Resources of Sparta and of Athens.** — The resources of Hellas were, at the outbreak of the war, very evenly divided between the two parties. With Sparta were all the states of the Peloponnesus, save Argos and Achaia, while beyond the Isthmus the Megareans, the Bœotian League headed by Thebes, the Locrians, and the Phocians were her chief allies. Together, these states could raise a land force of sixty thousand men, besides a considerable naval armament, Corinth being especially strong in ships.

Athens commanded all the resources of the subject cities — about three hundred in number, with twice as many smaller towns — of her great maritime empire. Her independent allies were Chios, Lesbos, Corcyra, and other states. Of course the chief strength of Athens lay in her splendid navy.

**The Beginning: Attack upon Plataea by the Thebans.** — The first act in the long and terrible drama was enacted at night, within the walls of Plataea. This city, though in Bœotia, was under the protection of Athens, and would have nothing to do with the Bœotian League, of which Thebes was the leading city.

Anxious to get possession of this place before the actual outbreak of the war which they saw to be inevitable, the Thebans planned its surprise and capture. Three hundred Thebans gained access to the unguarded city in the dead of night, and marching to the public square, summoned the Plataeans to exchange the Athenian for a Bœotian alliance.

The Plataeans were upon the point of acceding to all the demands made upon them, when, discovering the small number of the enemy, they attacked and overpowered them in the darkness,

and took a hundred and eighty of them prisoners. These captives they afterwards murdered, in violation, as the Thebans always maintained, of a sacred promise that their lives should be spared. This wretched affair at Plataea precipitated the war (431 B.C.).

**Invasion of Attica: Pestilence at Athens.** — A Spartan army was soon overrunning Attica, while an Athenian fleet was ravaging the coasts of the Peloponnesus.<sup>1</sup> Pericles persuaded the country people of Attica to abandon their villas and hamlets and gather within the defences of the city. He did not deem it prudent to risk a battle in the open fields. From the walls of Athens the people could see the flames of their burning villages and farmhouses, as the enemy ravaged the plains of Attica up to the very gates of the city. It required all the persuasion of Pericles to restrain them from issuing in a body from behind the ramparts and rushing to the defence of their homes.

The second year the Lacedæmonians again ravaged the fields about Athens, and drove the Athenians almost to frenzy with the sight of the flame and smoke of such property as had escaped the destruction of the previous year. To increase their misery, a pestilence broke out within the crowded city, and added its horrors to the already unbearable calamities of war. No pen could picture the despair and gloom that settled over the city. Athens lost, probably, one-fourth of her fighting men. Pericles, who had been the very soul and life of Athens through these dark days, fell a victim to the plague (429 B.C.). In dying, he said he considered his greatest praise to be that "he had never caused an Athenian to put on mourning."

<sup>1</sup> The war is usually divided into three periods, as follows: 1. From the beginning to the Peace of Nicias (431-421 B.C.), often designated as the Ten Years' War, or the Attic War, from the frequent invasions of Attica by the Peloponnesians; 2. From the Peace of Nicias to the defeat of the Sicilian expedition (421-413 B.C.); 3. From the Sicilian disaster to the dismantling of the defences of Athens (413-404 B.C.), called the Decelean War, from Decelea, a stronghold in Attica seized and held by the Spartans during this part of the struggle. This last period is also sometimes called the Ionian War, because so much of the fighting took place in Ionia.

After the death of Pericles the leadership of affairs at Athens fell into the hands of unprincipled demagogues, of whom Cleon was chief. The mob element got control of the popular assembly, so that hereafter we shall find many of its actions characterized neither by virtue nor wisdom.

**Desperate and Cruel Character of the War.** — On both sides the war was waged with the utmost vindictiveness and cruelty. As a rule, all the men captured by either side were killed.

In the year 428 B.C. the city of Mytilene, on the island of Lesbos, revolted from the Athenians. With the rebellion suppressed, the fate of the Mytileneans was in the hands of the Athenian assembly. Cleon proposed that all the men of the place, six thousand in number, should be slain, and the women and children sold as slaves. This infamous decree was passed, and a galley despatched bearing the sentence for execution to the Athenian general at Mytilene.

By the next morning, however, the Athenians had repented of their hasty and cruel resolution. A second meeting of the assembly was hurriedly called; the barbarous vote was repealed; and a swift trireme, bearing the reprieve, set out in anxious haste to overtake the former galley, which had twenty-four hours the start. The oarsmen of the trireme, with every nerve strung to the highest tension by the nature of their errand as well as by the promise of large rewards dependent upon the success of their mission, urged the vessel across the *Ægean* with almost preternatural energy. The trireme reached the island just in time to prevent the execution of the cruel edict.

The second resolution of the Athenians, though more discriminating than the first decree, was quite severe enough. Over one thousand of the nobles of Mytilene were killed, the city was destroyed, and the larger part of the lands of the island given to citizens of Athens.

Still more unrelenting and cruel were the Spartans. In the summer of the same year that the Athenians wreaked such vengeance upon the Mytileneans, the Spartans and their allies captured the



city of Plataea, put to death all the men, sold the women as slaves, and turned the site of the city into pasture-land.<sup>1</sup>

**Events leading up to the Peace of Nicias (421 B.C.).** — Soon after the affair at Mytilene and the destruction of Plataea, events occurred which show how completely the Athenian assembly had fallen under the influence of unprincipled politicians.

An enterprising general of the Athenians, named Demosthenes, seized and fortified a point of land (Pylos) on the coast of Messenia. The Spartans made every effort to dislodge the enemy. In the course of the siege, four hundred Spartans under Brasidas, having landed upon a little island (Sphacteria), were so unfortunate as to be cut off from the mainland by the sudden arrival of an Athenian fleet. Among the men thus imprisoned were some members of the first Spartan families.

To effect the release of the men upon the island, the Spartans sent commissioners to Athens to beg for peace. The terms offered were such as should at once have been embraced by the Athenians. But Cleon, desiring the war to go on, persuaded the assembly to reject the offers of the ambassadors, and to propose terms which he knew could not and would not be accepted by them. The result was the return of the deputies to Sparta, and the breaking off of the negotiations.

The Athenians soon had occasion to repent of their action. It was found a difficult matter to capture the Spartans who were upon the island, and Demosthenes was forced to send to Athens for reinforcements. Cleon was sent with additional ships and men. Rather through good fortune than by good generalship, he succeeded in capturing the Spartans, to the number of about three hundred, and bringing them prisoners to Athens.

But affairs now took a different turn. The Athenians, having imprudently invaded Bœotia, were worsted at the battle of Delium (424 B.C.). Along with this disaster came other troubles further to the north. The able and eloquent Spartan general,

<sup>1</sup> Read Thucydides' graphic account of the siege and reduction of the city, Books II. and III.

Brasidas, stirred up some of the Thracian allies of Athens to revolt. In the fighting which followed in this quarter, Cleon and Brasidas were both killed in battle. Again negotiations for peace were opened, which, after many embassies to and fro, resulted in what is known as the Peace of Nicias, from the prominent Athenian general who is supposed to have had most to do in bringing it about. The treaty arranged for a truce of fifty years. Each party was to give up to the other all prisoners and captured places.

**Alcibiades and the Sicilian Expedition** (415-413 B.C.). — The Peace of Nicias, as Thucydides tells us, was only a nominal one. Some of the allies of the two principal parties to the truce were dissatisfied with it, and consequently its terms were not carried out in good faith or temper on either side. So the war went on. For about seven years, however, Athens and Sparta refrained from invading each other's territory; but even during this period each was aiding its allies in making war upon the dependents or confederates of the other. Finally, hostilities flamed out in open and avowed war, and all Hellas was again lit up with the fires of the fratricidal strife.

The most prominent person on the Athenian side during this latter period of the struggle was Alcibiades, a versatile and brilliant man, but a reckless and unsafe counsellor. He was a pupil of Socrates, but he failed to follow the counsels of his teacher. His astonishing orgies only seemed to attach the people more closely to him, for he possessed all those personal traits which make men popular idols. His influence over the democracy was unlimited. By the unscrupulous employment of the various arts known to the successful demagogue, he was able to carry through the popular assembly almost any measure that it pleased him to advocate.



ALCIBIADES

The more prudent of the Athenians were filled with apprehension for the future of the state under such guidance. The noted misanthrope Timon gave expression to this feeling when, after Alcibiades had secured the assent of the popular assembly to one of his impolitic measures, he said to him: "Go on, my brave boy, and prosper; for your prosperity will bring on the ruin of all this crowd." And it did, as we shall see.

The most prosperous enterprise of Alcibiades, in the Timonian sense, was the inciting the Athenians to undertake an expedition against the Dorian city of Syracuse, in Sicily. The scheme that Alcibiades was revolving in his mind was a most magnificent one. He proposed that the Athenians, after effecting the conquest of Sicily, should make that island the base of operations against both Africa and Italy. With the Italians and Carthaginians subdued, the armaments of the entire Hellenic world outside of the Peloponnesus, were to be turned against the Spartans, who with one blow should be forever crushed, and Athens be left the arbiter of the destinies of Hellas.

Alcibiades succeeded in persuading the Athenians to undertake at least the first part of the colossal enterprise. An immense fleet was carefully equipped and manned.<sup>1</sup> Anxiously did those remaining behind watch the squadron as it bore away from the port of Athens. Could the watchers have foreseen the fate of the splendid armament, their anxiety would have passed into despair. "Athens itself was sailing out of the Piræus, never again to return."

Scarcely had the expedition arrived at Sicily, before Alcibiades, who was one of the leading generals in command of the armament, was summoned back to Athens to answer a charge of impiety.<sup>2</sup> Fearing to trust himself in the hands of his enemies at

<sup>1</sup> It consisted of one hundred and thirty-four costly triremes, bearing thirty-six thousand soldiers and sailors. The commanders were Alcibiades, Nicias, and Lamachus. Later, Demosthenes was sent out with a reinforcement consisting of seventy-three triremes and five thousand soldiers.

<sup>2</sup> Just upon the eve of the departure of the expedition, the numerous statues of Hermes scattered throughout the city were grossly mutilated. The

Athens, he fled to Sparta, and there, by traitorous counsel, did all in his power to ruin the very expedition he had planned. He advised the Spartans to send at once their best general to the Syracusans. They sent Gylippus, an able commander, whose generalship contributed largely to the total and irretrievable defeat that the Athenians finally suffered.<sup>1</sup> Their fleet and army were both virtually annihilated. The Athenian generals Nicias and Demosthenes, who with about seven thousand soldiers were made prisoners, were condemned to death. Hearing of their sentence, they committed suicide. The other prisoners were crowded into the open stone quarries, where hundreds speedily died of exposure and starvation. Most of the wretched survivors were finally sold as slaves. The disaster was appalling and complete. The resources of Athens were wrecked.

**The Decelean War: The Fall of Athens.** — While the Athenians were before Syracuse, the Spartans, acting upon the advice of Alcibiades, had taken possession of and fortified a strong and commanding position known as Decelea, in Attica, only twelve miles from Athens. This was a thorn in the side of Athens. Secure in this stronghold, the Spartans could annoy and keep in terror almost all the Attic plain. Decelea further proved a sort of city of refuge for the Athenian slaves, thousands of whom here found an asylum. The occupation by the Spartans of this strategic point had such a determining influence upon the remainder of the Peloponnesian War, that this latter portion of it is known as the Decelean War (413-404 B.C.).

Taking advantage of the terrible misfortunes of Athens, her sacrilegious act naturally produced a terrible excitement. Alcibiades was accused of having a hand in the affair, and furthermore of having mimicked the sacred rites of the Eleusinian mysteries. Taking advantage of the absence of himself and friends, his enemies had secured the passage of a decree demanding his recall and trial.

<sup>1</sup> The ruin of the Athenians was rendered absolutely complete by the incompetency and superstition of Nicias, who, an eclipse of the moon occurring, persisted in following the advice of his soothsayers, and delayed for days a retreat upon which depended the salvation of his army.

subject-allies now revolted and fell away from her on every side. The Persians, ever ready to aid the Greeks in destroying one another, lent a willing ear to the solicitations of the traitor Alcibiades, and gave help to the Spartans.

The Athenians put forth almost superhuman efforts to retrieve their fortunes. Had they been united among themselves, perhaps their efforts would not have been in vain. But the oligarchical party, for the sake of ruining the democracy were willing to ruin the empire. While the army was absent from Athens, they overturned the government, and established a sort of aristocratical rule (411 B.C.), under which affairs were in the hands of a council of Four Hundred.

The Athenian troops, however, who were at Samos, would not recognize the new government. They voted themselves to be the true Athens, and forgetting and forgiving the past, recalled Alcibiades, and gave him command of the army, thereby well illustrating what the poet Aristophanes said respecting the disposition of the Athenians toward the spoiled favorite, — "They love, they hate, but cannot live without him."

Alcibiades detached the Persians from the side of the Spartans, and gained some splendid victories for Athens. But he could not undo the evil he had done. He had ruined Athens beyond redemption by any human power. Constantly the struggle grew more and more hopeless. Alcibiades was defeated, and fearing to face the Athenians, who had deposed him from his command, sought safety in flight.

Finally, at Ægospotami, on the Hellespont, the Athenian fleet was surprised and captured by the Spartans under Lysander (405 B.C.). The prisoners, three thousand in number, were massacred, and the usual rites of burial denied their bodies.

The battle of Ægospotami sealed the fate of Athens. "That night," writes the historian Xenophon, referring to the night upon which the news of the woful disaster reached Athens, "That night no man slept."

The towns on the Thracian and Macedonian coasts, and the

islands of the Ægean belonging to the Athenian Empire, now fell into the hands of the Peloponnesians. Athens was besieged by sea and land, and soon forced to surrender.

Some of the allies insisted upon the total destruction of the city, and the conversion of its site into pasture-land. The Spartans, however, with apparent magnanimity, declared that they would never consent thus "to put out one of the eyes of Greece," strengthening the argument of the metaphor by urging in behalf of Athens the great service she had rendered Hellas in her struggle with the Barbarians.

The real motive, doubtless, of the Spartans in sparing the city was their fear lest, with Athens blotted out, Thebes or Corinth should become too powerful. So the city itself was spared, but the fortifications of Piræus and the Long Walls were levelled to the ground, the work of demolition being begun to the accompaniment of festive music (404 B.C.).

Sparta's power was now supreme. She had neither peer nor rival among all the Grecian states. Throughout the war she had maintained that her only purpose in warring against Athens was to regain liberty for the Grecian cities. We shall very soon see what sort of liberty it was that they enjoyed under her guardianship.

**Results of the War.** — "Never," says Thucydides, commenting upon the lamentable results of the Peloponnesian War, the worst consequences of which, however, he did not live to witness, "Never had so many cities been made desolate by victories; . . . never were there so many instances of banishment; never so many scenes of slaughter either in battle or sedition."

Athens was but the wreck of her former self. She had lost two hundred ships and sixty thousand men, including the killed among her allies. Things were just the reverse now of what they were at the time of the Persian invasion. When, with all Athens in ruins, Themistocles at Salamis was taunted by the Spartans with being a man without a city, he replied grandly, "Athens is here in her ships." But now the real Athens was gone: only the empty shell remained.



And all the rest of Hellas showed the marks of the cruel war. Spots where once had stood large towns were now pasture-land. But more lamentable than all else besides, was the effect of the war upon the intellectual and moral life of the Greek race. The Grecian world had sunk many degrees in morality; while the vigor and productiveness of the intellectual and artistic life of Hellas, the centre and home of which had been Athens, were impaired beyond recovery. The achievements of the Greek intellect, especially in the fields of philosophic thought, in the century following the war were, it is true, wonderful; but these triumphs merely show, we may believe, what the Hellenic mind would have done for art and general culture, had it been permitted, unchecked, and under the favoring and inspiring conditions of liberty and self-government, to disclose all that was latent in it.

## II. THE SPARTAN AND THE THEBAN SUPREMACY.

**Spartan Supremacy.**— For just one generation following the Peloponnesian War (404–371 B.C.), Sparta held the leadership of the Grecian states. Aristocratical governments, with institutions similar to the Spartan, were established in the different cities of the old Athenian Empire. At Athens, the democratical constitution of Solon, under which the Athenians had attained their greatness, was abolished, and an oppressive oligarchy established in its stead. The Thirty Tyrants, however, who administered this government were, after eight months' infamous rule, driven from the city, and the old democratic constitution, somewhat modified, was re-established (403 B.C.).

It was during this period that Socrates, the greatest moralist and teacher of antiquity, was condemned to death, because his teachings were thought contrary to the religion of the Athenians. To this era also belongs the well-known expedition of the Ten Thousand Greeks.

**Expedition of the Ten Thousand** (401-400 B.C.). — The aid given by the Persians to Sparta in the Peloponnesian War was not altogether unselfish. Cyrus, satrap of the Persian provinces of Asia Minor, thinking that his brother Artaxerxes held the throne unjustly,<sup>1</sup> was secretly planning to seize it for himself. In the latter part of the Peloponnesian War, when he saw the tide of events turning against Athens, he lent aid to the Spartans; proposing thus to place them under obligation to himself, so that he could ask their aid in his contemplated enterprise. Now the time had come for the return of the favor. To the army of one hundred thousand barbarians which Cyrus had raised in Asia, the Spartans added about eleven thousand Greek soldiers.

With this force Cyrus set out from Sardis, in the spring of 401 B.C. He marched without opposition across Asia Minor and Mesopotamia to Babylonia, into the very heart of the Persian Empire. Here, at Cunaxa, he was confronted by Artaxerxes with a force of more than half a million of men. The barbarian allies of Cyrus were scattered at the first onset of the enemy; but the Greeks stood like a rampart of rock. Cyrus, however, was slain; and the other Greek generals, having been persuaded to enter into a council, were treacherously murdered by the Persians.

The Greeks, in a hurried night meeting, chose new generals to lead them back to their homes. One of these was Xenophon, the popular historian of the expedition. Now commenced one of the most memorable retreats in all history. After a most harassing march over the hot plains of the Tigris and the icy passes of Armenia, the survivors reached the Black Sea, the abode of sister Greek colonies.

**Decline of the Spartan State: the Peace of Antalcidas** (387 B.C.). — The part taken by the Greeks in the enterprise of Cyrus

<sup>1</sup> "It was a matter of dispute whether the right of succession belonged to the eldest son, or to the son born first after his father's accession to the throne. The accession of Xerxes had been decided by the fact that he was born during the reign of Darius." — RANKE. According to this precedent, the throne now belonged to Cyrus.

led the Persian monarch Artaxerxes to seek revenge by interfering anew in the affairs of Greece. The Greek cities of Asia were the first to feel the resentment of the Great King. The Spartans, under their king Agesilaus, extended them timely and efficient aid. At one time it seemed as though the Persian authority in Asia Minor would be completely destroyed.

But meanwhile Persian gold was effecting in Greece what the Persian sword was unable to accomplish in Asia. The emissaries of Artaxerxes, by persuasions and bribes, had secured a coalition of the Grecian states against Sparta, and the threatening movements of these forced Agesilaus to return in haste to defend his own country. A disastrous struggle known as the Corinthian War (395-387 B.C.) now followed, in which the Spartans contended against the Athenians, the Thebans, the Corinthians, the Argives, and the Persians. Finally, after all parties were weary of the contest, the war was ended by the Peace of Antalcidas, so called from the Spartan commissioner who arranged the articles of the treaty.

By the terms of this peace, famous because so infamous, all the Greek cities of Asia Minor, as well as the island of Cyprus and the island-city of Clazomenæ, were handed over to the Persians. Three islands — Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros — were given to Athens. All the other islands, and the states of the Grecian mainland, were left each in a condition of isolated independence. No city was to rule over others, or to exact tribute from them. The edict of King Artaxerxes closed as follows: "Whosoever refuses to accept this peace, him I shall fight, assisted by those who are of the same mind [which meant the Spartans], by land as well as by sea, with ships and with money."

Sparta has been accused of selfishness in the part she took in forcing the Grecian states to accept the terms of the Peace of Antalcidas. But we should not be too ready to cast blame upon her. It is true that, in order to break the coalition that had been formed against her, she bartered away the liberties of the Hellenic cities in Asia; but we must bear in mind that this measure was

dictated by the instinct of self-preservation. There were at Sparta some at least animated by feelings of sufficiently generous patriotism to cause them to lament the circumstances that thus laid Greece open to the mercy of her enemy. Among these was the patriot king Agesilaus, whom Plutarch calls the "Thought Commander and King of all Greece." Referring to the jealousies and contentions of the Hellenic states which had now resulted in making the hated Persians arbiters in their affairs, he exclaimed, "Alas for Greece! she has killed enough of her sons to have conquered all these Barbarians."

The Peace of Antalcidas left Sparta free to prosecute anew her schemes of aggression and tyranny towards the other Grecian states, which were now too divided and weakened to offer any effectual resistance to her oppressive course. But finally the fiery resentment kindled by her tyrannous measures inspired such a determined revolt against her as brought to an end her assumed supremacy over her sister cities.

**Theban Supremacy** (371-362 B.C.). — It was a city in Bœotia that led the uprising against Sparta. This was Thebes. The oligarchical government which the Lacedæmonians had set up in that capital was overthrown by Pelopidas at the head of the so-called Sacred Band, a company of three hundred select men who were bound by oath to stand by each other to the last. Pelopidas was seconded in all his efforts by Epaminondas, one of the ablest generals the Grecian race ever produced. Under the masterly guidance and inspiration of these patriot leaders, Thebes very soon secured a predominating influence in the affairs of Greece.

Like many others who have done most for their generation, Epaminondas was often unjustly accused and persecuted. He it was who, when his enemies sought to disgrace and annoy him by electing him "public scavenger," made, in accepting the office, the memorable utterance, "If the office will not reflect honor upon me, I will reflect honor upon it."

At Leuctra (371 B.C.) the Thebans earned the renown of being the most invincible soldiers in the world by completely overthrow-

ing, with a force of six thousand men, the Spartan army of twice that number. This is said to have been the first time that the Spartans were ever fairly defeated in open battle. Their forces had been annihilated, as at Thermopylæ, — but annihilation is not defeat.

From the victory of Leuctra dates the short but brilliant period of Theban hegemony. The year after that battle Epaminondas led an army into the Peloponnesus to aid the Arcadians, who had risen against Sparta. Laconia was ravaged, and for the first time Spartan women saw the smoke of fires kindled by an enemy.

To strengthen Arcadia's power of resistance to Sparta, Epaminondas perfected a league among the hitherto isolated towns and cantons of the district. As the mutual jealousies of the leading cities prevented him from making any one of them the capital of the confederation, he founded Megalopolis, or the Great City, and made it the head of the union.

In the pursuit of the same policy, Epaminondas also restored the independence of Messenia, thus enforcing upon Sparta in regard to this province the terms of the Peace of Antalcidas. That the liberated Messenians might be better able to maintain the independence he had restored to them, Epaminondas founded as a stronghold a city, called Messene, upon Mount Ithome, a rocky eminence made renowned through its heroic defence by the Messenians in their old-time wars with Sparta.

Thus, almost in a day, did Epaminondas, as he himself said, "make all Greece free, restore independence to Messenia, and surround Sparta with a perpetual blockade."

But, moved by jealousy of the rapidly growing power of Thebes, Athens now formed an alliance with her old rival Sparta against her. Three times more did Epaminondas lead an army into the Peloponnesus in the interest of Thebes, and for the furtherance of his ambitious plans. During his third and last expedition he fought with the Spartans and Athenians the great battle of Mantinea, in Arcadia. On this memorable field, Epaminondas led the

Thebans once more to victory ; but he himself was slain, and with him fell the hopes and power of Thebes (362 B.C.).

All the states of Greece now lay exhausted, worn out by their endless domestic contentions and wars. There was scarcely sufficient strength left to strike one worthy blow against enslavement by the master destined soon to come from the North.



## CHAPTER VIII.

PERIOD OF MACEDONIAN SUPREMACY: EMPIRE OF  
ALEXANDER.

(338-323 B.C.)

**Macedonian Rulers of Hellenic Race.** — Although political power and influence have now passed away from the Grecian cities of Sparta, Athens, and Thebes, still we must not think that political authority has departed from the Hellenic race; for though the mass of the population of the country of Macedonia, which lay to the north of Greece proper, and which is now to assume the lead in the civil affairs of the Greeks, may not have sprung from the same identical stock as that from which the Hellenes arose, still the ruling class of that country were the same in race, language, and religion. The kings even took part in the Olympian games — a privilege accorded to none but pure Hellenes. Their efforts to spread Greek art and culture among their subjects, a race of rough but brave and martial men, unaccustomed to city life, had been so far successful that the country had, to a certain degree, become Hellenized.

So this period of Macedonian supremacy upon which we are entering belongs to the history of the political life of the Greek race, as well as the eras marked by Athenian, Spartan, or Theban leadership. It was Hellenic institutions, customs, and manners, Hellenic language and civilization, that the Macedonians, in the extended conquests which we are about to narrate, spread over the world.<sup>1</sup> It is this which makes the short-lived Macedonian empire so important in universal history.

<sup>1</sup> Of course it was rather the outer forms than the real inner life and spirit of the old Greek civilization which were adopted by the non-Hellenic peoples

**Philip of Macedon.** — Macedonia first rose to importance during the reign of Philip II. (359–336 B.C.), better known as Philip of Macedon. He was a man of pre-eminent ability, of wonderful address in diplomacy, and possessed rare genius as an organizer and military chieftain. The art of war he had learned in youth as a hostage-pupil of Epaminondas of Thebes. He was the originator of the “Macedonian phalanx,” a body as renowned in the military history of Macedonia as is the “legion” in that of Rome.<sup>1</sup> ✓

With his kingdom settled and consolidated at home, Philip’s ambition led him to seek the leadership of the Grecian states. He sought to gain his purpose rather by artful diplomacy and intrigue than by open force. In the use of these weapons he might have been the teacher of the Athenian Themistocles.

**Conquest of Olynthus and Thrace.** — By force and intrigue Philip extended his power over the Greek cities of Chalcidice, a number of which under the lead of Olynthus formed a league known as the Olynthian Confederacy. The Athenians had interests in this quarter, several cities of the peninsula being subject to them, and they, as soon as their eyes were opened to Philip’s real designs by his treacherous dealings with them, set themselves to thwart his plans. But they unfortunately acted with little of their old-time energy, and the result was that Philip had very much his own way. He first made friends of the Olynthians, and then, in punishment for their having given up their alliance with him for one with Athens, he took and destroyed Olynthus, and sold the

of Egypt and Western Asia. Hence the resulting culture is given a special name. “This civilization, Greek in its general character, but pervading people not exclusively Greek by race, is properly called *Hellenism*, which means, — not ‘being Hellenes,’ or Greeks, but — ‘doing *like* Hellenes’; and as the adject’ve answering to *Hellas* is *Hellenic*, so the adjective answering to *Hellenism* is *Hellenistic*.” — JEBB, *Greek Literature*, p. 138.

<sup>1</sup> The phalanx was formed of soldiers drawn up sixteen files deep, and armed with pikes so long that those of the first five ranks projected beyond the front of the column, thus opposing a perfect thicket of spears to the enemy. On level ground it was irresistible.

inhabitants into slavery (348 B.C.). He also destroyed thirty other towns in the peninsula. Thus all Chalcidice became a part of Macedonia.

Meanwhile Philip was also subduing the barbarians of Thrace, and pushing his eastern frontier towards the Hellespont. All the western part of Thrace, with its rich gold mines, quickly fell into his hands. In this quarter he founded the important and well-known city of Philippi.<sup>1</sup> At a later period, his attempt against Byzantium was foiled by the Athenians, who aided the inhabitants in the defence of their city, because it was the key to the Black Sea region, in the trade of which the Athenians were deeply interested, as they drew from thence their supplies of corn.

**The Second Sacred War** (355-346 B.C.). — At the same time that Philip was thus extending his power over Thrace and the Greek cities of Chalcidice, he was, in the following way, acquiring a commanding position in the affairs of the states of Greece proper.

The Phocians had put to secular use some of the lands which, at the end of the First Sacred War (see p. 183), had been consecrated to the Delphian Apollo. Taken to task and heavily fined for this act by the other members of the Delphian Amphictyony, the Phocians deliberately robbed the temple, and used the treasure in the maintenance of a large force of mercenary soldiers. Thus they were enabled to hold out against all their enemies, chief among whom were the Thebans. The Amphictyons not being able to punish the Phocians for their impiety, were forced to ask help of Philip, who gladly rendered the assistance sought.

The Phocians were now quickly subdued, their cities were destroyed, and the inhabitants scattered in villages and forced to pay tribute to the Delphian Apollo. The place that the Phocians had held in the Delphian Amphictyony was given to Philip, upon

<sup>1</sup> Philippi was the first European city in which the Gospel was preached. The preacher was the Apostle Paul, who went over from Asia in obedience to the vision in which a man of Macedonia seemed to stand and pray, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us."

whom was also bestowed the privilege of presiding at the Pythian games. The position he had now secured was just what Philip had coveted, in order that he might use it to make himself master of all Greece.

**Battle of Chæronea** (338 B.C.).—Demosthenes at Athens was one of the few who seemed to understand the real designs of Philip. His penetration, like that of Pericles, descried a cloud lowering over Greece—this time from the North. With all the energy of his wonderful eloquence, he strove to stir up the Athenians to resist the encroachments of the king of Macedon. He hurled against him his famous “Philippics,” speeches so filled with fierce denunciation that they have given name to all writings characterized by bitter criticism or violent invective.

At length the Athenians and Thebans, aroused by the oratory of Demosthenes and by some fresh encroachments of the Macedonians, united their forces, and met Philip upon the memorable field of Chæronea in Bœotia. The Macedonian phalanx swept everything before it. The Theban band was annihilated. The power and authority of Philip were now extended and acknowledged throughout Greece (338 B.C.).

**Plan to Invade Asia.**—While the Greek states were divided among themselves, they were united in an undying hatred of the Persians. They were at this time meditating an enterprise fraught with the greatest importance to the history of the world. This was a joint expedition against Persia. The march of the Ten Thousand Greeks through the very heart of the dominions of the Great King had encouraged this national undertaking, and illustrated the feasibility of the conquest of Asia. At a great council of the Grecian cities held at Corinth, Philip was chosen leader of this expedition. All Greece was astir with preparation. In the midst of all, Philip was assassinated during the festivities attending the marriage of his daughter, and his son Alexander succeeded to his place and power (336 B.C.).

**Alexander the Great.**—Alexander was only twenty years of age when he came to his father’s throne. The genius which has

won for him the title of "Great" was foreshadowed in early youth. The familiar and well-told story of the vicious steed Bucephalus, which none dared mount or approach, but which was subdued in a moment by the boy Alexander, exhibits that subtle magnetism



HEAD OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

of his nature by which he acquired such wonderful influence and command over men in after-years. The spirit of the man is again shown in the complaint of the boy when news of his father's victories came to him: "Friends," said he to his playmates,

“my father will possess himself of everything, and leave nothing for us to do.”

**Alexander crosses the Hellespont** (334 B.C.). — For about two years Alexander was busy suppressing revolts against his power among the different cities of Hellas, and chastising hostile tribes on the northern frontiers of Macedonia. Thebes having risen against him, he razed the city to the ground, — sparing, however, the house of the poet Pindar, — and sold thirty thousand of the inhabitants into slavery. Thus was one of the most renowned of the cities of Greece blotted out of existence.

Alexander was now free to carry out his father's scheme in regard to the Asiatic expedition. In the spring of 334 B.C., with all his plans matured, he set out, at the head of an army numbering about thirty-five thousand men, for the conquest of the Persian Empire. Now commenced one of the most remarkable and swiftly executed campaigns recorded in history.

Crossing the Hellespont, Alexander routed the Persians at the important battle of the Granicus, by which victory all Asia Minor was laid open to the invader. Three hundred suits of armor, selected from the spoils of the field, were sent as a votive offering to the Temple of Athena at Athens.

**The Gordian Knot.** — On Alexander's route through Asia Minor was the city of Gordium, where, in the temple of Zeus, hung the celebrated Gordian knot. Respecting this the following story is told: An oracle had commanded the Phrygians, in a time of great perplexity, to choose as their king the first person that came to sacrifice in the Temple of Zeus. The peasant Gordius was the one whom chance designated. He was riding in a wagon when the people proclaimed him king. Some accounts, however, say that it was his son Midas — who was with his father — that was elevated to the throne. Grateful to the gods for the honor that had fallen upon his house, Gordius consecrated the wagon as a memorial in the temple of Zeus.

It was gradually spread abroad that an oracle had declared that whoever should untie the skilfully fastened knot which united the



yoke to the pole of the chariot would be master of Asia. Alexander attempted the feat. Unable to loosen the artful knot, he impetuously drew his sword and cut it. Hence the phrase "cutting the Gordian knot," meaning a short way out of a difficulty. The marvellous fulfilment of the prediction in the subsequent successes of Alexander gave new faith and credit to the oracle.

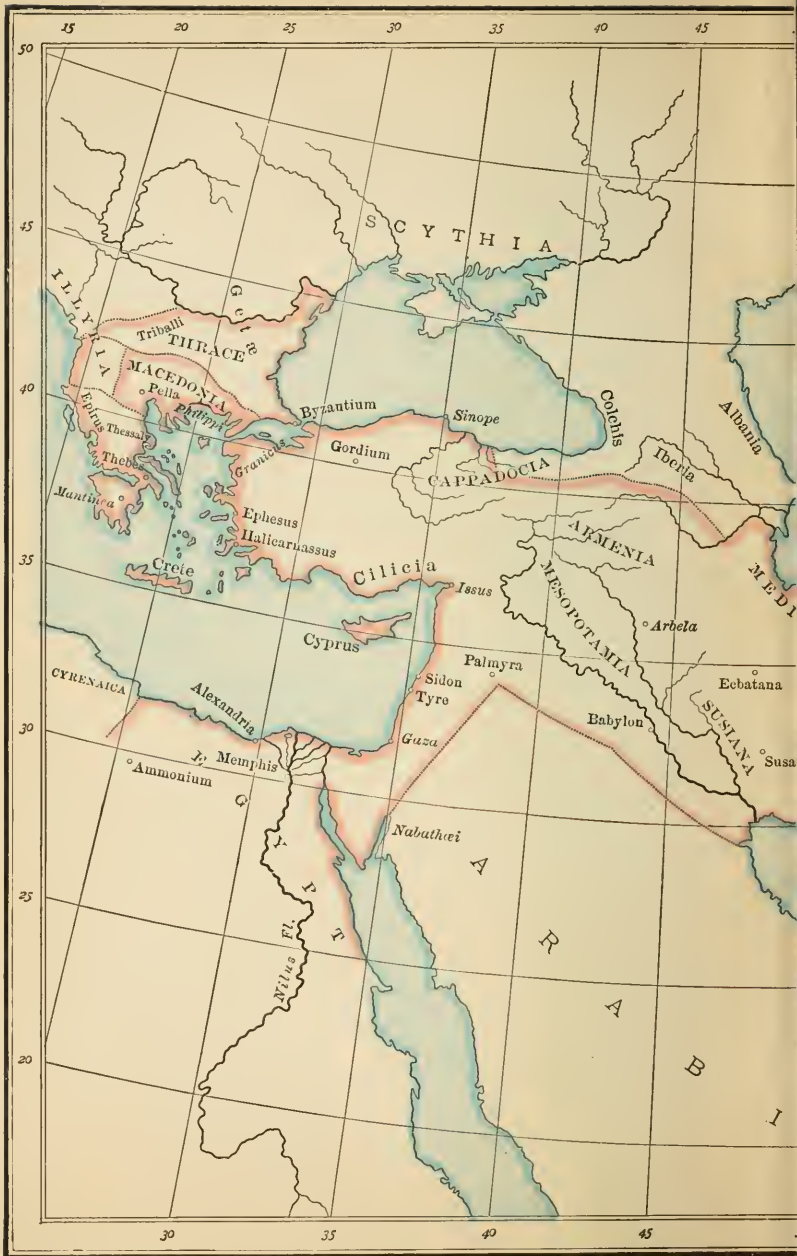
**The Battle of Issus** (333 B.C.). — At the northeast corner of the Mediterranean lies the plain of Issus. Here Alexander again defeated the Persian army, numbering six hundred thousand men. The family of Darius, including his mother, wife, and children, fell into the hands of Alexander; but the king himself escaped from the field, and hastened to his capital, Susa, to raise another army to oppose the march of the conqueror.

**Siege of Tyre** (332 B.C.). — Before penetrating to the heart of the empire, Alexander turned to the south, in order to effect the subjugation of Phœnicia, that he might command the Phœnician fleets and prevent their being used to sever his communication with Greece. The island city of Tyre, after a memorable siege, was taken by means of a mole, or causeway, built with incredible labor through the sea to the city. This mole was constructed out of the ruins of old Tyre and the forests of Lebanon. It still remains, uniting the desolate rock with the mainland. When at last, with the aid of the Sidonian fleet, the city was taken, after a siege of seven months, eight thousand of the inhabitants were slain, and thirty thousand sold into slavery — a terrible warning to those cities that should dare to close their gates against the Macedonian. The reduction of Tyre has been considered the greatest military achievement of Alexander.

**Alexander in Egypt.** — With the cities of Phœnicia and the fleets of the Mediterranean subject to his control, Alexander easily effected the conquest of Egypt. The Egyptians, indeed, made no resistance to the Macedonians, but willingly exchanged masters.

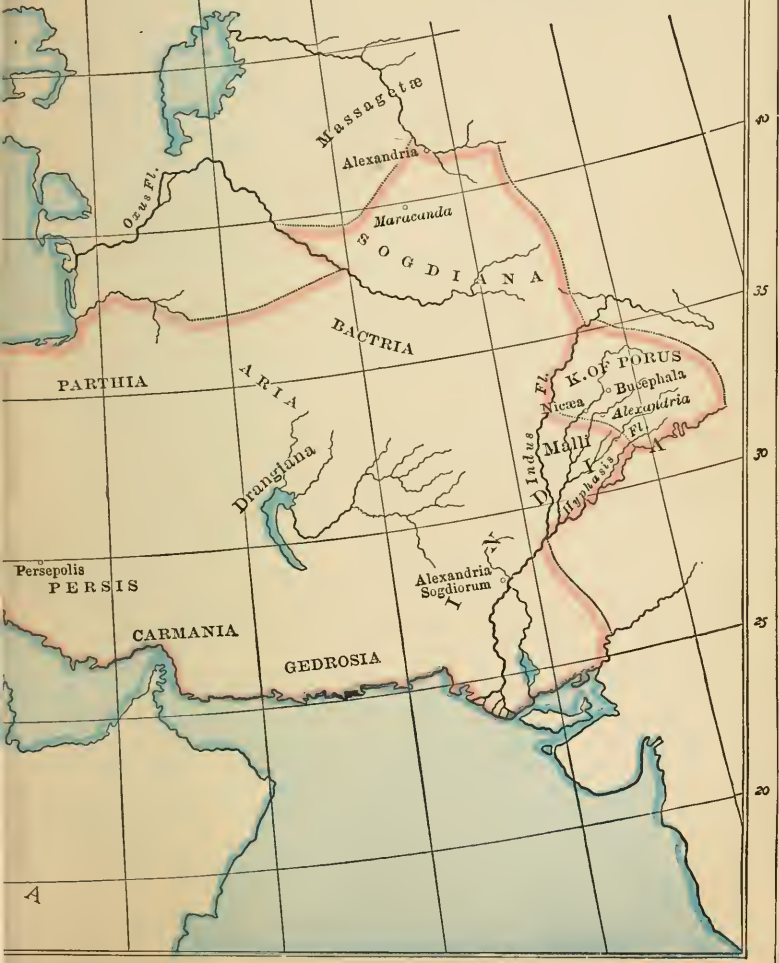
While in the country, Alexander founded, at one of the mouths of the Nile, a city called after himself, Alexandria. Ranke believes this to have been the "first city in the world, after the





DOMINIONS  
AND DEPENDENCIES OF  
ALEXANDER

C.B.C.323.





Piræus at Athens, erected expressly for purposes of commerce." The city became the meeting-place of the East and the West; and its importance through many centuries attests the far-sighted wisdom of its founder.

A less worthy enterprise of the conqueror was his expedition to the oasis of Siwah, located in the Libyan desert, where were a celebrated temple and oracle of Zeus Ammon. To gratify his own vanity, as well as to impress the superstitious barbarians, Alexander desired to be declared of celestial descent. The priests of the temple, in accordance with the wish of the king, gave out that the oracle pronounced Alexander to be the son of Zeus Ammon, and the destined ruler of the world.

**The Battle of Arbela** (331 B.C.). — From Egypt Alexander recommenced his march towards the Persian capital. He had received offers of peace from Darius, but to these he is said to have replied, "There cannot be two suns in the heavens." Pushing on, he crossed the Euphrates and the Tigris without opposition; but upon the plain of Arbela, not far from ancient Nineveh, he found his further advance disputed by Darius with an immense army. Again the Macedonian phalanx "cut through the ranks of the Persians as a boat cuts through the waves." The fate of Darius has been already narrated in our story of the last of the Persian kings.<sup>1</sup>

The battle of Arbela was one of the decisive combats of history. It marked the end of the long struggle between the East and the West, between Persia and Greece, and prepared the way for the spread of Hellenic civilization over all Western Asia.

**Alexander at Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis.** — From the field of Arbela Alexander marched south to Babylon, which opened its gates to him without opposition. To attach the Babylonians to himself, he restored the temples which Xerxes had destroyed, and offered sacrifices in the temple of Bel.

Susa was next entered by the conqueror. Here he seized

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 142, 143.



incredible quantities of gold and silver (\$57,000,000, it is said), the treasure of the Great King.

From Susa Alexander's march was next directed to Persepolis, where he secured a treasure more than twice as great (\$138,000,000, according to some) as that found at Susa. Upon Persepolis Alexander wreaked vengeance, for all Greece had suffered at the hands of the Persians. Many of the inhabitants were massacred, and others sold into slavery; while the palaces of the Persian kings were given to the flames.

Alexander, having thus overthrown the power of Darius, now began to regard himself, not only as his conqueror, but as his successor, and was thus looked upon by the Persians. He assumed the pomp and state of an Oriental monarch, and required the most obsequious homage from all who approached him. His Greek and Macedonian companions, unused to paying such servile adulation to their king, were much displeased at Alexander's conduct, and from this time on to his death, intrigues and conspiracies were being constantly formed among them against his power and life.

**Alexander in the Aryan Home.** — Urged on by an uncontrollable desire to possess himself of the most remote countries of which any accounts had ever reached him, Alexander now led his army to the north, and, after subduing many tribes that dwelt about the Caspian Sea and among the mountainous regions of what is now known as Afghanistan, boldly conducted his soldiers over the snowy and dangerous passes of the Hindu Kush, and descended into the fair provinces of Bactria, which region we have already described as probably the earliest home of the various families of the Aryan race. Had Alexander possessed our modern knowledge of the relationships of the different Aryan peoples, he might have claimed, as he would have been very likely to do, the entire country as having once belonged to his ancestors.

During the years 329–328 B.C. Alexander conquered not only Bactria, but Sogdiana, a country lying north of the Oxus. The capture of the Sogdian Rock is considered one of his great

exploits. Among the captives was a beautiful Bactrian princess, Roxana by name, who became the bride of Alexander.

Throughout those distant regions Alexander founded numerous cities, several of which bore his own name. One of them is said to have been built, wall and houses, in twenty days. These new cities were peopled with captives, and by those whom fatigue and wounds would no longer allow to follow the conqueror in his swift campaigns.

Alexander's stay in Sogdiana was saddened by his murder of his dearest friend Clitus, who had saved his life at the Granicus. Both were flushed with wine when the quarrel arose: after the deed, Alexander was overwhelmed with remorse.<sup>1</sup>

**Conquests in India.** — With the countries north of the Hindu Kush subdued and settled, Alexander recrossed the mountains, and led his army down upon the rich and crowded plains of India (327 B.C.). Here again he showed himself invincible, and received the submission of many of the native princes of the country.

The most formidable resistance encountered by the Macedonians was offered by a strong and wealthy king named Porus. Captured at last and brought into the presence of Alexander, his proud answer to the conqueror's question as to how he thought he ought to be treated was, "Like a king." The impulsive Alexander gave him back his kingdom, to be held, however, subject to the Macedonian crown.

Alexander's desire was to extend his conquests to the Ganges, but his soldiers began to murmur because of the length and hardness of their campaigns, and he reluctantly gave up the undertaking. To secure the conquests already made, he founded, at different points in the valley of the Indus, Greek towns and colo-

<sup>1</sup>The Macedonian kingdom which grew out of the conquests of Alexander in Central Asia, lasted for about two centuries after his death; that is, these Bactrian countries were ruled by Hellenic princes for that length of time. Traditions of the conqueror still linger in the land, and coins, and plate with subjects from classic mythology, are frequently turned up at the present day.

nies. One of these he named Alexandria, after himself; another Bucephala, in memory of his favorite steed; and still another Nicæa, for his victories. The modern museum at Lahore contains many relics of Greek art, dug up on the site of these Macedonian cities and camps.

**Rediscovery of the Sea-route from the Indus to the Euphrates.** — It was Alexander's next care to bind these distant conquests in the East to those in the West. To do this, it was of the first importance to establish water-communication between India and Babylonia. Now, strange as it may seem, the Greeks had no positive knowledge of what sea the Indus emptied into, and only a vague idea that there was a water-way from the Indus to the Euphrates. This important maritime route, once known to the civilized world, had been lost, and needed to be rediscovered.

So the conqueror Alexander now turned explorer. He sailed down the Indus to the head of the delta, where he founded a city, which he called Alexandria. This was to be to the trade of India what Alexandria upon the Nile was to that of Egypt. With this new commercial city established, Alexander sailed on down to the mouth of the river, and was rejoiced to find himself looking out upon the southern ocean.

He now despatched his trusty admiral Nearchus, with a considerable fleet, to explore this sea, and to determine whether it communicated with the Euphrates. He himself, with the larger part of the army, marched westward along the coast. His march thus lay through the ancient Gedrosia, now Beluchistan, a region frightful with burning deserts, amidst which his soldiers endured almost incredible privations and sufferings.

After a trying and calamitous march of over two months, Alexander, with the survivors of his army, reached Carmania. Here, to his unbounded joy, he was joined by Nearchus, who had made the voyage from the Indus successfully, and thus "rediscovered one of the most important maritime routes of the world," the knowledge of which, among the Western nations, was never again to be lost.

To appropriately celebrate his conquests and discoveries, Alexander instituted a series of religious festivals, amidst which his soldiers forgot the dangers of their numberless battles and the hardships of their unparalleled marches, which had put to the test every power of human endurance.

And well might these veterans glory in their achievements. In a few years they had conquered half the world, and changed the whole course of history.

**Plans and Death of Alexander.** — As the capital of his vast empire, which now stretched from the Ionian Sea to the Indus, Alexander chose the ancient Babylon, upon the Euphrates. His designs, we have reason to believe, were to push his conquests as far to the west as he had extended them to the east. Arabia, Carthage, Italy, and Spain were to be added to his already vast domains. Indeed, the plans of Alexander embraced nothing less than the union and Hellenizing of the world. Not only were the peoples of Asia and Europe to be blended by means of colonies, but even the floras of the two continents were to be intermingled by the transplanting of fruits and trees from one continent to the other. Common laws and customs, a common language and a common religion, were to unite the world into one great family. Intermarriages were to blend the races. Alexander himself married a daughter of Darius III., and also one of Artaxerxes Ochus; and to ten thousand of his soldiers, whom he encouraged to take Asiatic wives, he gave magnificent gifts.

In the midst of his vast projects, Alexander was seized by a fever, brought on, doubtless, by his insane excesses, and died at Babylon, 323 B.C., in the thirty-second year of his age. His soldiers could not let him die without seeing him. The watchers of the palace were obliged to open the doors to them, and the veterans of a hundred battle-fields filed sorrowfully past the couch of their dying commander. His body was carried, first, to Memphis, but afterwards to Alexandria, in Egypt, and there enclosed in a golden coffin, over which was raised a splendid mausoleum. His ambition for celestial honors was gratified in his death; for in

Egypt and elsewhere temples were dedicated to him, and divine worship was paid to his statues.

**Character of Alexander.** — We must not pass this point without a word, at least, respecting the character of this remarkable man, who, in a brief career of twelve years, changed entirely the currents of history, and pressed them into channels which they would not have followed but for the influence of his life and achievements.

We cannot deny to Alexander, in addition to a remarkable genius for military affairs, a profound and comprehensive intellect. The wisdom shown in the selection of Alexandria in Egypt as the great depot of the exchanges of the East and West has been amply proved by the rare fortunes of that city. His plans for the union of Europe and Asia, and the fusion of their different races, might indeed seem visionary, were it not that the degree in which this was actually realized during subsequent centuries attests the sanity of the attempt. He had fine tastes, and liberally encouraged art, science, and literature. Apelles, Praxiteles, and Lysippus had in him a munificent patron; and to his preceptor Aristotle he sent large collections of natural-history objects, gathered in his extended expeditions. He had an impulsive, kind, and generous nature: he avenged the murder of his enemy Darius; and he repented in bitter tears over the body of his faithful Clitus. He exposed himself like the commonest soldier, sharing with his men the hardships of the march and the dangers of the battle-field.

But he was self-seeking and self-indulgent, foolishly vain, and madly ambitious of military glory. He plunged into shameful excesses, and gave way to bursts of passion that transformed a usually mild and generous disposition into the fury of a madman. The vindictive cruelty he manifested in his treatment of the Tyrians can be only partially palliated by reference to the spirit and usages of his age. The contradictions of his life cannot, perhaps, be better expressed than in the words once applied to the gifted Themistocles: "He was greater in genius than in character."

**Results of Alexander's Conquests.** — The remarkable conquests

of Alexander had far-reaching consequences. They ended the long struggle between Persia and Greece, and spread Hellenic civilization over Egypt and Western Asia. The distinction between Greek and Barbarian was obliterated, and the sympathies of men, hitherto so narrow and local, were widened, and thus an important preparation was made for the reception of the cosmopolitan creed of Christianity. The world was also given a universal language of culture, which was a further preparation for the spread of Christian teachings. Nor should we fail to recall the rediscovery of the maritime route from India to Europe, which the historian Ranke, regarding its influence upon trade and commerce, views as one of the most important results of Alexander's expedition.

But the evil effects of the conquest were also positive and far-reaching. The sudden acquisition by the Greeks of the enormous wealth of the Persian Empire, and contact with the vices and effeminate luxury of the Oriental nations, had a most demoralizing effect upon Hellenic life. Greece became corrupt, and she in turn corrupted Rome. Thus the civilization of antiquity was undermined.



CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF GRECIAN HISTORY TO THE  
DEATH OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Legendary Age . . .	{ The Trojan War, legendary date . . . . .	1194-1184
	{ The Dorians enter the Peloponnesus, about . . . . .	1104
Early History of Sparta . . . . .	{ Lycurgus gives laws to Sparta. . . . .	850
	{ The Messenian Wars . . . . .	750-650
Early History of Athens . . . . .	{ Rule of the Archons . . . . .	1050-612
	{ Rebellion of Cylon . . . . .	612
	{ Legislation of Solon . . . . .	594
	{ Pisistratus rules . . . . .	560-527
	{ Expulsion of the Pisistratidæ . . . . .	510
Period of Græco-Persian War . . . . .	{ First Expedition of Darius (led by Mar- donius) . . . . .	492
	{ Battle of Marathon . . . . .	490
	{ Battle of Thermopylæ . . . . .	480
	{ Battle of Salamis . . . . .	480
	{ Battles of Plataea and Mycale . . . . .	479
Period of Athenian Supremacy . . . . .	{ Athens rebuilt . . . . .	478
	{ Aristides chosen first president of the Con- federacy of Delos . . . . .	477
	{ Themistocles sent into exile . . . . .	471
	{ Ostracism of Cimon . . . . .	459
	{ Pericles at the head of affairs—Periclean Age . . . . .	459-431
Events of the Peloponnesian War . . . . .	{ Beginning of the Peloponnesian War . . . . .	431
	{ Pestilence at Athens . . . . .	430
	{ Expedition against Syracuse . . . . .	415
	{ Battle of Ægospotami . . . . .	405
	{ Close of the War . . . . .	404
Period of Spartan Supremacy . . . . .	{ Rule of the Thirty Tyrants at Athens . . . . .	404-403
	{ Expedition of the Ten Thousand . . . . .	401-400
	{ Peace of Antalcidas . . . . .	387
	{ Oligarchy established at Thebes . . . . .	382
	{ Spartan power broken on the field of Leuc- tra . . . . .	371
Period of Theban Supremacy . . . . .	{ Battle of Leuctra which secures the suprem- acy of Thebes . . . . .	371
	{ Battle of Mantinea and death of Epaminon- das . . . . .	362
Period of Macedonian Supremacy . . . . .	{ Battle of Chæronea . . . . .	338
	{ Death of Philip of Macedon . . . . .	336
	{ Alexander crosses the Hellespont . . . . .	334
	{ Battle of Issus . . . . .	333
	{ Battle of Arbela . . . . .	331
	{ Death of Alexander at Babylon . . . . .	323

## CHAPTER IX.

## STATES FORMED FROM THE EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER.

**Division of the Empire of Alexander.** — There was no one who could wield the sword that fell from the hand of Alexander. It is told that, when dying, being asked to whom the kingdom should belong, he replied, "To the strongest," and handed his signet ring to his general Perdiccas. But Perdiccas was not strong enough to master the difficulties of the situation.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, who is strong enough to rule the world?

Consequently the vast empire created by Alexander's unparalleled conquests was distracted by quarrels and wars, and before the close of the fourth century B.C., had become broken into many fragments. Besides minor states,<sup>2</sup> four well-defined and important

<sup>1</sup> Perdiccas ruled as regent for Philip Arrideus (an illegitimate brother of Alexander), who was proclaimed titular king.

<sup>2</sup> Two of these lesser states, Rhodes and Pontus, deserve special notice.

**Rhodes.** — Rhodes became the head of a maritime confederation of the cities and islands along the coasts of Asia Minor, and thus laid the basis of a remarkable commercial prosperity and naval power. It was one of the chief centres of Hellenistic culture, and acquired a wide fame through its schools of art and rhetoric. Julius Cæsar became a student here under Rhodian teachers of oratory.

**Pontus.** — Pontus (Greek for *sea*), a state of Asia Minor, was so called from its position upon the Euxine. It was never thoroughly conquered by the Macedonians. It has a place in history mainly because of the lustre shed upon it by the transcendent ability of one of its kings, Mithridates the Great (120–63 B.C.), who spread the fame of his little kingdom throughout the world by his able, and for a long time successful, resistance to the Roman arms. But his wars with Rome belong rather to the history of that city than to the annals of Greece.

monarchies arose out of the ruins. After the rearrangement of boundaries that followed the decisive battle of Ipsus (fought in Phrygia 301 B.C.), these principal states had the outlines shown by the accompanying map. Their rulers were Lysimachus, Seleucus Nicator, Ptolemy, and Cassander, who had each assumed the title of king. The great horn being broken, for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

Lysimachus held Thrace and the western part of Asia Minor; Seleucus Nicator, Syria and the countries eastward to the Indus; Ptolemy ruled Egypt; and Cassander governed Macedonia, and claimed authority over Greece.<sup>2</sup>

After barely mentioning the fate of the kingdom of Lysimachus, we will trace very briefly the fortunes of the other three monarchies until they were overthrown, one after the other, by the now rapidly rising power of Rome.

**Thrace, or the Kingdom of Lysimachus.** — The kingdom of Lysimachus soon disappeared. He was defeated by Seleucus in the year 281 B.C., and his dominions were divided. The lands in Asia Minor were joined to the Syrian kingdom, while Thrace was absorbed by Macedonia.

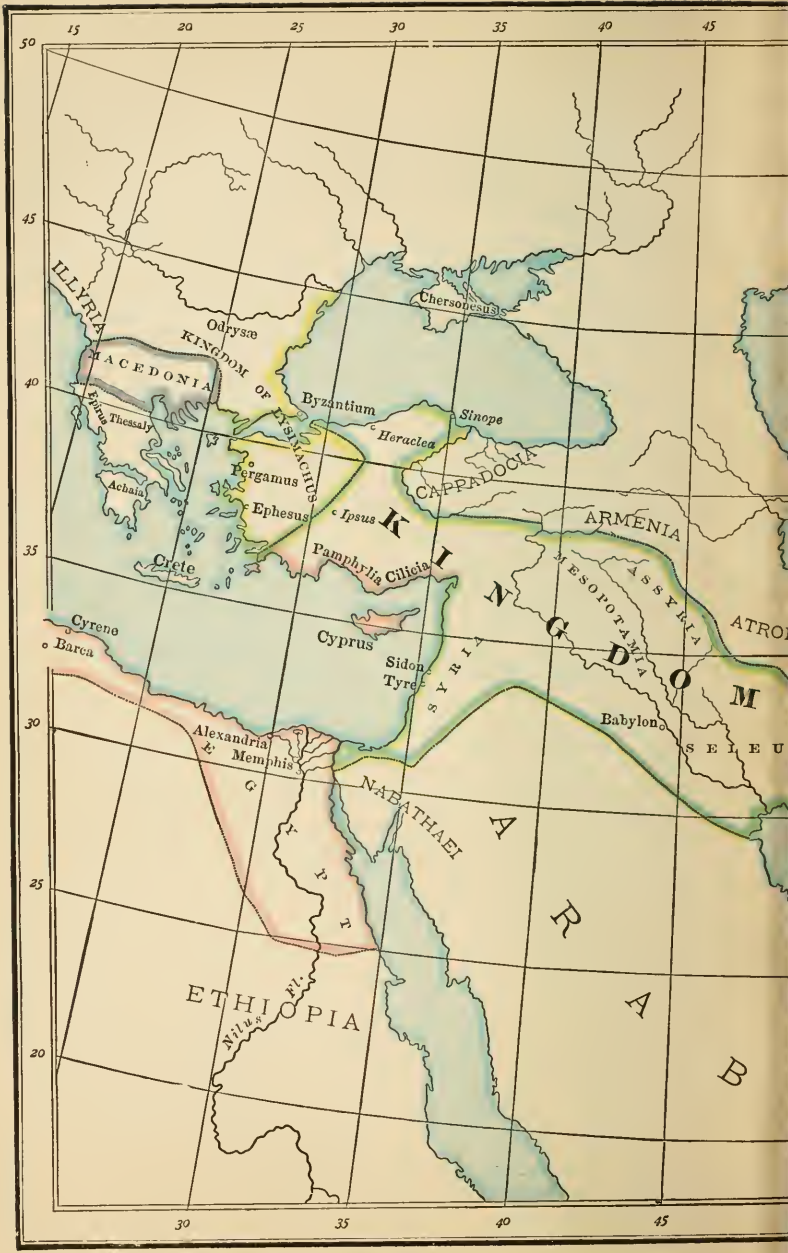
**Syria, or the Kingdom of the Seleucidæ** (312–65 B.C.). — This kingdom, during the two centuries and more of its existence, played an important part in the civil history of the world. Under its first king it comprised nominally almost all the countries of Asia conquered by Alexander, thus stretching from the Hellespont to the Indus; but in reality the monarchy embraced only Asia Minor, Syria, and the old Assyria and Babylonia. Its rulers were called Seleucidæ, from the founder of the kingdom, Seleucus Nicator.

Seleucus Nicator (312–280 B.C.), besides being a ruler of unusual ability, was a most liberal patron of learning and art. He is declared to have been “the greatest founder of cities that ever

<sup>1</sup> Dan. viii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Cassander never secured complete control of Greece, hence this country is not included in his domains as these appear upon the map.

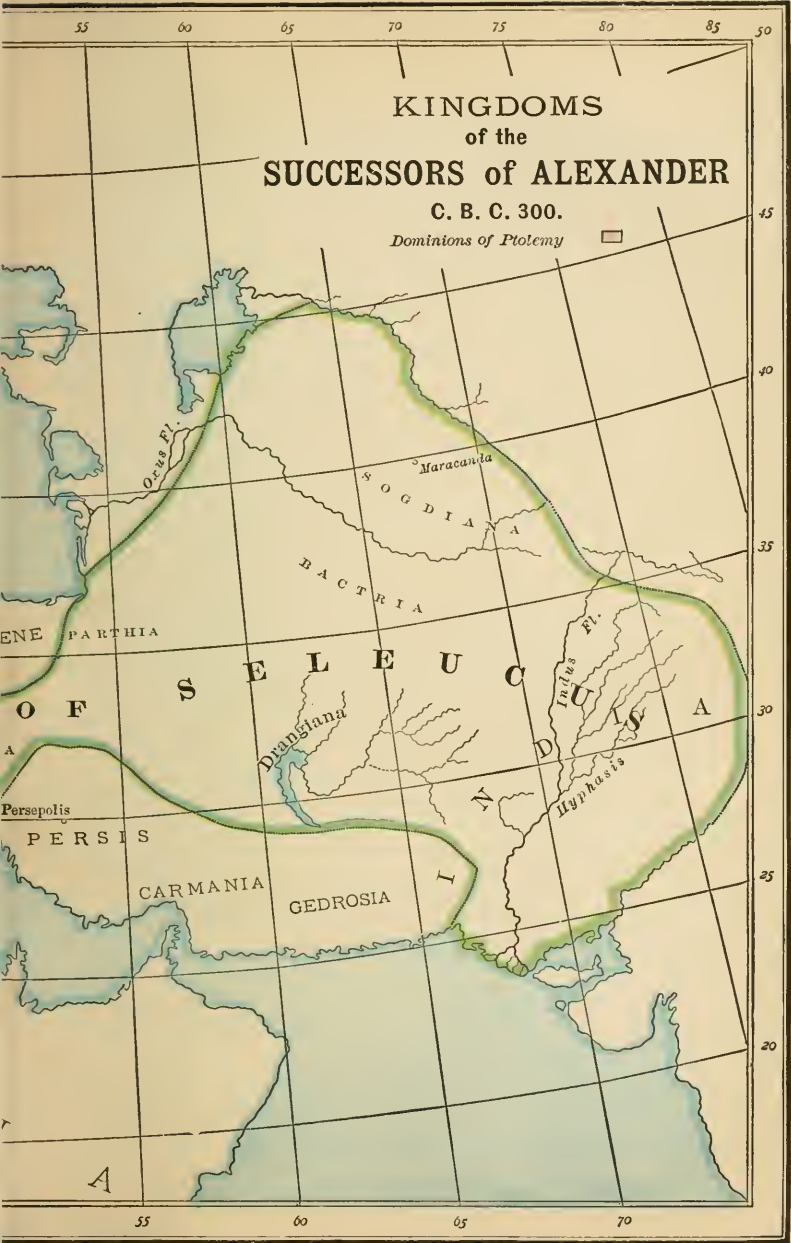




KINGDOMS  
of the  
SUCCESSORS of ALEXANDER

C. B. C. 300.

*Dominions of Ptolemy*







lived." Throughout his dominions he founded a vast number, some of which endured for many centuries, and were known far and wide as centres of trade and Hellenistic civilization.

Upon the Tigris, as a rival to Babylon, he built Seleucia, which grew rapidly into a capital of six hundred thousand inhabitants. In its customs, manners, and government, it was essentially a Greek city transplanted from Europe. As Seleucia rose, Babylon sank into obscurity, and soon disappeared from history. Six other cities in different parts of his empire bore the name Seleucia, after himself; sixteen he called Antioch, in honor of his father; five he named Laodicea, for his mother; still others bore the name Apamea, in honor of one of his wives. Antioch, on the Orontes, in Northern Syria, became, after Seleucia on the Tigris, the capital of the kingdom, and obtained an influence and renown as a centre of population and trade which have given its name a sure place in history.<sup>1</sup>

This colonization of Western Asia by Greeks was, as has already been remarked, one of the most noteworthy results of the Græco-Macedonian conquest. The founding of all these cities, however, as the historian Ranke observes, "must not be reckoned solely to the credit of Seleucus and Alexander. Their origin was closely connected with the main tendencies of Greek colonization. The Greeks had struggled long and often to penetrate into Asia, but so long as the Persian empire remained supreme they were energetically repulsed, and it was only as mercenaries that they found admittance. This bar was now removed. Released from all restrictions and attracted by the revolution in politics, the Greeks now streamed into Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt."

The successors of Seleucus Nicator led the kingdom through checkered fortunes. On different sides provinces fell away and

<sup>1</sup> Antioch still remains; but most of the other cities are gone, with scarcely a trace left of their former existence. Thus the site of the great capital Seleucia, once the rival of Babylon, is now marked by just a few mounds and heaps of rubbish.

became independent states.<sup>1</sup> Antiochus III. (223-187 B.C.), called "the Great," raised the kingdom for a short time into great prominence; but attempting to make conquests in Europe, and further giving asylum to the Carthaginian general Hannibal, he incurred the fatal hostility of Rome. Quickly driven by the Roman legions across the Hellespont, he was hopelessly defeated at the battle of Magnesia (190 B.C.), and a large part of Asia Minor fell into the hands of the Romans, who gave the most of it to their friend and ally Eumenes II., king of Pergamus (see note below). After the battle of Magnesia the Syrian kingdom was of very little importance in the world's affairs.

Antiochus IV., Epiphanes (176-164 B.C.), by the pillage and desecration of the temple at Jerusalem, drove the Jews to successful revolt, under the lead of the heroic Maccabees, which event has already been noticed in the history of the Jewish people (see p. 116). Others kept the kingdom in constant contention with the states of Asia Minor on the west, with the Bactrians and Parthians on the east, and with Egypt on the south. At last, brought again into collision with Rome, the country was overrun by Pompey the Great, and became a part of the Roman Republic, 63 B.C.

<sup>1</sup> The most important of these were the following:—

1. **Pergamus.**—This was a state in Western Asia Minor, which became independent upon the death of Seleucus Nicator (280 B.C.). Favored by the Romans, it gradually grew into a powerful kingdom, which at the time of Eumenes II. (197-159 B.C.) embraced a considerable part of Asia Minor. Its capital, also called Pergamus, became a most noted centre of Greek learning and civilization, and through its great library and university gained the renown of being, next to Alexandria in Egypt, the greatest city of the Hellenistic world. In 133 B.C. Attalus III., after killing all his heirs, ended a life which was a perfect tissue of follies by bequeathing his kingdom to the Roman people, who immediately took steps to secure the prize, and made it into a province under the name of Asia.

2. **Parthia.**—Parthia was a powerful Turanian state that grew up east of the Euphrates, in the lands that formed the heart and centre of the old Persian Empire (from about 255 B.C. to 226 A.D.). Its kings were at first formidable enemies of the rulers of Syria, and later of the Romans, whom they never allowed to make any considerable conquest beyond the Euphrates.

**Kingdom of the Ptolemies in Egypt** (323-30 B.C.). — The Græco-Egyptian empire of the Ptolemies was by far the most important, in its influence upon the civilization of the world, of all the kingdoms that owed their origin to the conquests of Alexander. The founder of the house and dynasty was Ptolemy I., surnamed Soter<sup>1</sup> (323-283 B.C.). His descendants ruled in Egypt for nearly three centuries, a most important period in the intellectual life of the world. Ptolemy was a general under Alexander, and seemed to possess much of his ability and restless energy, with a happy freedom from his great commander's faults.

Upon the partition of the empire of Alexander, Ptolemy received Egypt, with parts of Arabia and Libya. To these he added by conquest Cœle-Syria, Phœnicia, Palestine, Cyrene, and Cyprus. Following the usage of the time, he transported one hundred thousand Jews from Jerusalem to Alexandria, attached them to his person and policies by wise and conciliatory measures, and thus effected at this great capital of the Nile that blending of the races of the East and the West which was the dream of Alexander.

The possession of the forests of Mount Lebanon, and the command of the artisans of Phœnicia, enabled Ptolemy to realize his plans of making Egypt a naval power, and the emporium of the carrying trade between Asia and Europe. Alexandria became the great depot of exchange for the productions of the world. At the entrance of the harbor stood the Pharos, or light-house,—the first structure of its kind,—which Ptolemy built to guide the fleets of the world to his capital. This edifice was reckoned one of the Seven Wonders.

But it was not alone the exchange of material products that was comprehended in Ptolemy's scheme. His aim was to make his capital the intellectual centre of the world — the place where the arts, sciences, literatures, and even the religions, of the world should meet and mingle. He founded the famous Museum, a sort of college, which became the "University of the East," and established

<sup>1</sup> That is, *deliverer*, a name given him by the Rhodians in gratitude for military aid that he rendered them.

the renowned Alexandrian Library. Poets, artists, philosophers, and teachers in all departments of learning were encouraged to settle in Alexandria by the conferring of immunities and privileges, and by gifts and munificent patronage. His court embraced the learning and genius of the age.

Ptolemy Philadelphus (283-247 B.C.) followed closely in the footsteps of his father, carrying out, as far as possible, the plans and policies of the preceding reign. To secure Egypt's commercial supremacy, the old Pharaonic canal uniting the Nile and the Red Sea was restored, and roads were constructed to facilitate the transportation of merchandise from the ports on that sea to the river. Philadelphus added largely to the royal library, and extended to scholars the same liberal patronage that his father had before him.

The surname Philadelphus (brother-lover) was given this Ptolemy on account of his tender devotion to his wife Arsinoe, who was also his sister. This usage of intermarriage among the members of the royal family — a usage in which the Ptolemies followed what was a custom of the ancient Pharaohs — was one of the causes of the contentions and calamities which at last overwhelmed the house with woes and infamy.

Ptolemy III. (247-222 B.C.) was called by the Egyptians *Euergetes* (benefactor), because in one of his wars — a war against the king of Syria, which led him beyond the Euphrates — he recaptured and placed again in their temples some statues of the Egyptian gods which the Persian conqueror Cambyses and the Assyrian Sargon had borne away as trophies. He was possessed of great military genius, and under him the dominions of the Ptolemies touched their widest limits; while the capital Alexandria reached the culminating point in her fame as the centre of Greek civilization.

Altogether the Ptolemies reigned in Egypt almost exactly three centuries (323-30 B.C.). Those rulers who held the throne for the last two hundred years were, with few exceptions, a succession of monsters, such as even Rome in her worst days could scarcely

equal. These monarchs plunged into the most despicable excesses, and were guilty of every folly and cruelty. The usage of intermarriage, already mentioned, led to endless family quarrels, which resulted in fratricide, matricide, and all the dark deeds included in the calendar of royal crime. The story of the renowned Cleopatra, the last of the house of the Ptolemies, will be told in connection with Roman history, to which it properly belongs.

**Macedonia and Greece.** — From the time of the subjection of Greece by Philip and Alexander to the absorption of Macedonia into the growing dominions of Rome, the Greek cities of the peninsula were very much under the control or influence of the Macedonian kings. But the Greeks were never made for royal subjects, and consequently they were in a state of chronic revolt against this foreign authority.

Thus, no sooner had they heard of the death of Alexander than several of the Grecian states arose against the Macedonian general Antipater, and carried on with him what is known as the Lamian War<sup>1</sup> (323–321 B.C.). The struggle ended disastrously for the Greeks, and Demosthenes, who had been the soul of the movement, was forced to flee from Athens. He took refuge upon an island just off the coast of the Peloponnesus; but being still hunted by Antipater, he put an end to his own life by means of poison.

The next matter of moment in the history of Macedonia was an invasion of the Gauls (Celtic tribes from Scythia), under the lead of Brennus (279 B.C.). Both Macedonia and Greece suffered terribly from these savage marauders. Being driven from Europe, the barbarians finally settled in Asia Minor, and there gave name to the province of Galatia.

Macedonia now comes in contact with a new enemy — the great military republic of the West. For lending aid to Carthage in the second Punic War, she incurred the anger of Rome, which resulted, after much intrigue and hard fighting, in the country's being brought

<sup>1</sup> From the city of Lamia in Thessaly, where Antipater was besieged by the Greeks.



into subjection to the Italian power. In the year 146 B.C. it was erected into a Roman province.

The political affairs of Greece proper during the period we are considering were chiefly comprehended in the fortunes of two confederacies, or leagues, one of which, called the Achæan League, embraced finally all the states of the Peloponnesus,<sup>1</sup> as well as some cities outside its limits; while the other, known as the Ætolian League, comprised many of the states north of the Corinthian Gulf.<sup>2</sup>

United, these two confederacies might have maintained the political independence of Greece; but that spirit of dissension which we have seen to be the bane of the Hellenic peoples led them to become, in the hands of intriguing Rome, weapons first for crushing Macedonia, and then for grinding each other to pieces.

Soon after the conquest of Macedonia, the Ætolians were made tributary to Rome. At the same time, a thousand of the leading citizens of the cities of the Achæan League were, on the pretext of their conspiring against Rome, transported to Italy, and for seventeen years kept as political prisoners in the different cities of Etruria. At the end of that time the surviving exiles were allowed to return home, the perfidious Romans foreseeing and hoping that their desire for revenge would betray them into some violent act which would afford Rome a pretext for invading and confiscating their territory. All fell out as anticipated. The exiles were no sooner returned to their native land than they stirred up their countrymen to revolt against Rome. Corinth, which, since the Peloponnesian War had ruined Athens, was the most splendid city

<sup>1</sup> Sparta was not a member of the League at first, but its jealous and bitter enemy. The Spartan king Cleomenes waged with the confederated states what is known as the *Cleomenic War* (224–221 B.C.). The League sought and obtained aid of Macedonia, and Sparta was defeated.

<sup>2</sup> For a study of these confederations, which were very much like our own federal union, consult Freeman's valuable work entitled *History of Federal Constitutions*.

of all Greece, was taken by the Roman army and laid in ashes (146 B.C.). This was the last act in the long and varied drama of the political life of ancient Greece. Henceforth it constituted simply a portion of the Roman Empire.

**Review.** — We have now traced the political fortunes of the Hellenic race through about seven centuries of authentic history. Starting with the institutions of the primitive Greek communities, we have followed the early growth of the leading Grecian states, and have watched their memorable struggle with the power of the Persian kings; we have noticed the brilliant era of Athenian supremacy which followed that contest; we have seen the terrible calamities finally brought by the mutual jealousies of the two rival states of Athens and Sparta, not only upon themselves, but upon all Hellas; then, after brief periods of Spartan and Theban supremacy, we have seen Macedonia assume the leadership of the Greek race, unite half the world in a single kingdom under an Alexander, and spread Hellenic ideas, institutions, and language from Italy to the regions beyond the Indus; we have also seen this enormous Macedonian empire, through the rivalries of ambitious generals and through lack of that capacity to unite for political ends which was the fatal defect of the Greek character, torn into pieces, and these fragments, after more or less varied political fortunes, seized upon one after another by the rapacity of Rome.

In succeeding chapters it will be our pleasanter task to trace the more brilliant and worthy fortunes of the artistic and intellectual life of Hellas: to portray, though necessarily in scanty outline, the achievements of that wonderful genius which enabled her, "captured, to lead captive her captor."

RULERS OF THE KINGDOM OF THE SELEUCIDÆ.

	B. C.
Seleucus I., Nicator, founder of the kingdom . . . . .	312-281
Antiochus I., Soter . . . . .	281-261
Antiochus II., Theos . . . . .	261-246
Seleucus II. . . . .	246-226
Seleucus III., Ceraunus . . . . .	226-223
Antiochus III., the Great . . . . .	223-187
Seleucus IV., Philopator . . . . .	187-176
Antiochus IV., Epiphanes (revolt of the Jews under Judas Maccabæus) . . . . .	176-164
Antiochus V., Eupator . . . . .	164-162
Several obscure names . . . . .	162-69
Antiochus VIII., last of the Seleucidæ . . . . .	69-65

RULERS OF THE GRÆCO-EGYPTIAN KINGDOM OF THE PTOLEMIES.

	B. C.
Ptolemy I., Soter . . . . .	323-283
Ptolemy II., Philadelphus . . . . .	283-247
Ptolemy III., Euergetes . . . . .	247-222
Ptolemy IV. . . . .	222-205
Ptolemy V. . . . .	205-181
Ptolemy VI. . . . .	181-146
Several obscure names . . . . .	146-51
Cleopatra, last of the line . . . . .	51-30
Egypt becomes a part of the Roman Empire . . . . .	30

## CHAPTER X.

## GREEK ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, AND PAINTING.

## I. INTRODUCTORY.

**The Greek Sense of Beauty.** — The Greeks were artists by nature. They possessed an organization that was most exquisitely sensitive to impressions of the beautiful. As it has been expressed, “ugliness gave them pain like a blow.” Everything they made, from the shrines for their gods to the meanest utensils of domestic use, was beautiful. Beauty they placed next to holiness; indeed, they almost or quite made beauty and moral right the same thing. It is said that it was noted by the Greeks as something strange and exceptional that Socrates was good, notwithstanding he was ugly in feature.

The first maxim in Greek art was the same as that which formed the first principle in Greek morality — “Nothing in excess.” The Greek eye was offended at any exaggeration of parts, at any lack of symmetry or proportion in an object. The proportions of the Greek temple are perfect. Any deviations from the measurements or canons of the Greek artists are found to be departures from the ideal.

Clearness of outline was another requirement of Greek taste. The artistic Greek had a positive dislike of all vagueness or indistinctness of form. Contrast the clear-cut lines of a Greek temple with the vague, ever-vanishing lines of a Mediæval Gothic cathedral.

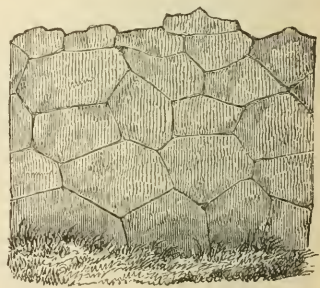
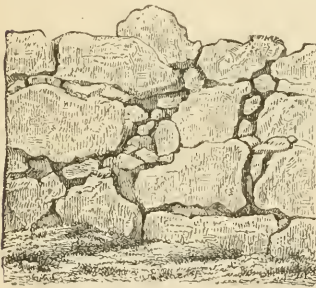
It is possible that Nature herself taught the Greeks these first principles of their art. Nature in Greece never goes to extremes. The Grecian mountains and islands are never over-large. The climate is never excessively cold nor oppressively hot. And

Nature here seems to abhor vagueness. The singular transparency of the atmosphere, especially that of Attica, lends a remarkable clearness of outline to every object. The Parthenon in its clear-cut features seems modelled after the hills that lie with such absolute clearness of form against the Attic sky.

## II. ARCHITECTURE.

**Pelasgian Architecture.** — The term Pelasgian is applied to various structures of massive masonry — walls, tombs, and subterranean aqueducts — found in different parts of Greece, Italy, and Asia Minor. The origin of these works was a mystery to the earliest Hellenes, who ascribed them to the giant Cyclops; hence the name Cyclopean that also attaches to them.

These works exhibit three well-defined stages of development. In the earliest and rudest structures the stones are gigantic in size and untouched by the chisel; in the next oldest the stones are



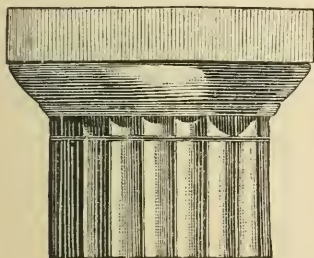
PELASGIAN MASONRY.

worked into irregular polygonal blocks; while in the latest the blocks are cut into rectangular shapes and laid in regular courses. The walls of the old citadels or castles of several Grecian cities exhibit specimens of this primitive architecture. The celebrated so-called Treasury of Atreus, a subterranean vaulted structure at

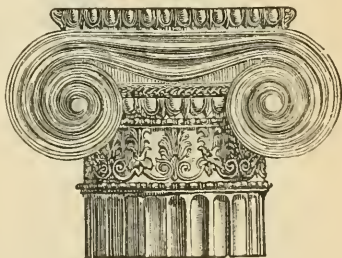
Mycenæ, is a noted example of the latest form of Pelasgian art. The best specimen of the oldest form is found at Tiryns, near Mycenæ.

**First Grecian Temples.** — In the earliest times the Greeks had no temples, save the forests. The statues of the gods were first placed beneath the shelter of a tree, or within its hollow trunk. After a time, a building rudely constructed of the trunks of trees and shaped like the habitations of men, marked the first step in advance. Then stone took the place of the wooden frame. With the introduction of a durable material, the artist was encouraged to expend more labor and care upon his work. Thus architecture began to make rapid strides, and by the century following the age of Solon at Athens there were many beautiful temples in different parts of the Hellenic world.

**Orders of Architecture.** — Before speaking of the most noted temples of Hellas, we must first name the three styles, or orders,



DORIC CAPITAL.



IONIC CAPITAL.

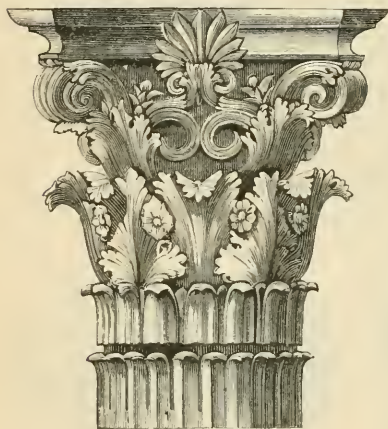
of Grecian architecture. These are the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian. They are distinguished from one another chiefly by differences in the proportions and ornamentation of the column.

The Doric column is without a base, and has a simple and massive capital. The prototype of this order may be seen at Beni-Hassan, in Egypt. At first the Doric temples of the Greeks were almost as massive as the Egyptian temples, but later they became more refined.



The Ionic column is characterized by the spiral volutes of the capital. This form was borrowed from the Assyrians, and was principally employed by the Greeks of Ionia, whence its name.

The Corinthian order is distinguished by its rich capital, formed of acanthus leaves. This type is made up of Egyptian, Assyrian, and Grecian elements. The bell shape of the capital is in imitation of the Egyptian style. The addition of the acanthus leaves is said to have been suggested to the artist Callimachus by the pretty



CORINTHIAN CAPITAL.

effect of a basket surrounded by the leaves of an acanthus plant, upon which it had accidentally fallen. This order was not much employed in Greece before the time of Alexander the Great.

The entire structure was made to harmonize with its supporting columns. The general characteristics of the several orders are well portrayed by the terms we use when we speak of the "stern" Doric, the "graceful" Ionic, and the "ornate" Corinthian.

**Temple of Diana at Ephesus.** — The temple of Diana at Ephesus was one of the oldest, as well as one of the most famous, of the sacred edifices of the Greeks. The original structure was commenced about the beginning of the sixth century B.C., and, according to Pliny, was one hundred and twenty years in process of building. Cræsus gave liberally of his wealth to ornament the shrine. It was known far and wide as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

In the year 356 B.C., on the same night, it is said, that Alexander was born, an ambitious youth, named Herostratus, fired the building, simply to immortalize his name. The roof of the struc-

ture was of cedar, and this, probably, was the only part destroyed. It was restored with even greater splendor than at first. Alexander coveted the honor of rebuilding the temple, and proposed to the Ephesians to do so, provided that he be allowed to inscribe his name upon it. The Ephesians gracefully declined the proposal by replying that it was not right for one deity to erect a temple to another.<sup>1</sup> Alexander was obliged to content himself with placing within the shrine his own portrait by Apelles — a piece of work which cost \$30,000. The value of the gifts to the temple was beyond all calculation: kings and states vied with one another in splendid donations. Painters and sculptors were eager to have their masterpieces assigned a place within its walls, so that it became a great national gallery of paintings and statuary.

So inviolable was the sanctity of the temple that at all times, and especially in times of tumult and danger, property and treasures were carried to it as a safe repository.<sup>2</sup> But the riches of the sanctuary proved too great a temptation to the Roman emperor

<sup>1</sup> Alexander, it appears, made a similar offer to the priests of the temple of Athena Polias at Priene, a city of Caria, for a tablet has been found upon which Alexander's name is engraved as dedicator. The slab may be seen in the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> The Grecian temples were, in a certain sense, banks of deposit. They contained special chambers or vaults for the safe-keeping of valuables. The heaps of gold and silver relics discovered by Di Cesnola at Sunium, in the island of Cyprus, were found in the secret subterranean vaults of a great temple. The priests often loaned out on interest the money deposited with them, the revenue from this source being added to that from the leased lands of the temple and from the tithes of war booty, to meet the expenses of the services of the shrine. We may liken the wealth of the ancient temples to that of the Mediæval churches. "The gods were the wealthiest capitalists." Usually the temple property in Greece was managed solely by the priests; but the treasure of the Parthenon at Athens formed an exception to this rule. The treasure here belonged to the State, and was controlled and disposed of by the vote of the people. Even the personal property of the goddess, the gold drapery of the statue (see p. 296), which was worth about \$600,000, could be used in case of great need, but it must be replaced in due time, with a fair interest.

Nero. He risked incurring the anger of the great Diana, and robbed the temple of many statues and a vast amount of gold. Later (in 262 A.D.), the barbarian Goths enriched themselves with the spoils of the shrine. The temple itself fared but little better than the treasures it guarded. The Goths left it a ruin; and long after, some of the celebrated jasper columns were, by order of the emperor Justinian, carried to Byzantium, and there at this day uphold the dome of St. Sophia, once the most noted church, now the most famous mosque, in all the East. Other columns from this ruin were taken to Italy and built into Christian churches there.<sup>1</sup>

**The Delphian Temple.** — The first temple erected at Delphi over the spot whence issued the mysterious vapors was a rude wooden structure. In the year 548 B.C., the temple then standing was destroyed by fire. All the cities and states of Hellas contributed to its rebuilding. Even the king of Egypt, Amasis, sent a munificent gift. More than half a million of dollars was collected; for the temple was to exceed in magnificence anything the world had yet seen. It will be recalled that the Athenian Alcmaeonidæ were the contractors who undertook the rebuilding of the shrine (see p. 205).

The structure was impressive both in its colossal size and the massive simplicity that characterizes the Doric style of architecture. It was crowded with the spoils of many battle-fields, with the rich gifts of kings, and with rare works of art. Like the temple at Ephesus, the Delphian shrine, after remaining for many years secure, through the awe and reverence which its oracle inspired, suffered frequent spoliation. The greed of conquerors overcame all religious scruples. The Phocians robbed the temple of a treasure equivalent, it is estimated, to more than \$10,000,000 with us (see p. 259); and Nero plundered it of five hundred bronze images. But Constantine (emperor of Rome 306–337 A.D., and founder of Constantinople) was the Nebuchadnezzar who bore off

<sup>1</sup>The site of the temple was for many centuries lost; but in 1871, Mr. Wood, an excavator, uncovered portions of its ancient pavement, and brought to light fragments of sculpture, which may now be seen in the British Museum.

the sacred vessels and many statues as trophies to his new capital then rising on the Hellespont.

**The Athenian Acropolis and the Parthenon.** — In the history of art there is no other spot in the world possessed of such interest as the flat-topped rock, already described, which constituted the Athenian Acropolis. We have seen that in early times the eminence was used as a stronghold. But by the fifth century B.C. the city had slipped down upon the plain, and the summit of the rock was consecrated to the temples and the worship of the deities, and came to be called “the city of the gods.” During the period of Athenian supremacy, especially in the Periclean Age, Hellenic



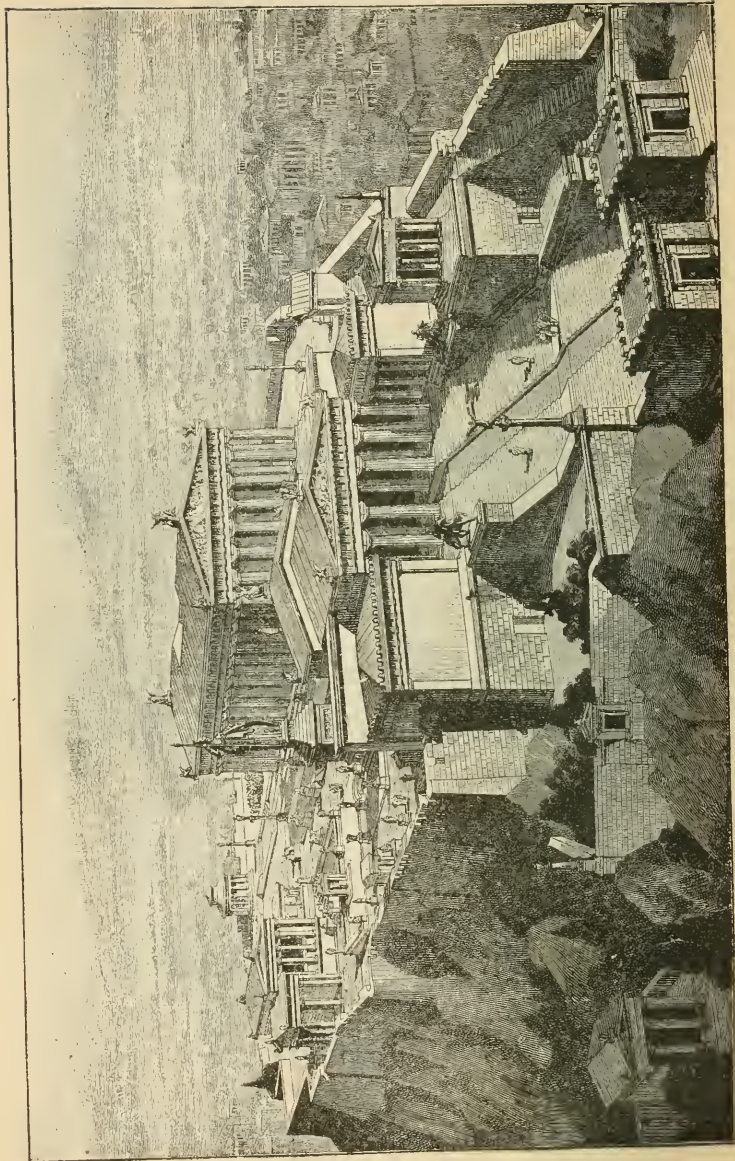
ATHENIAN YOUTH IN PROCESSION. (From the Frieze of the Parthenon.)

genius and piety adorned this spot with temples and statues that all the world has pronounced to be faultless specimens of beauty and taste.

The most celebrated of the buildings upon the Acropolis was the Parthenon, the “Residence of the virgin-goddess Athena.” This is considered the finest specimen of Greek architecture. It was designed by the architect Ictinus, but the sculptures that adorned it were the work of the celebrated Phidias.<sup>1</sup> It was built in the

<sup>1</sup> The subject of the wonderful frieze running round the temple was the procession which formed the most important feature of the Athenian festival known as the Greater Panathenæa, which was celebrated every four years in





THE ACROPOLIS AT ATHENS. (Restored by G. Rehlender.)

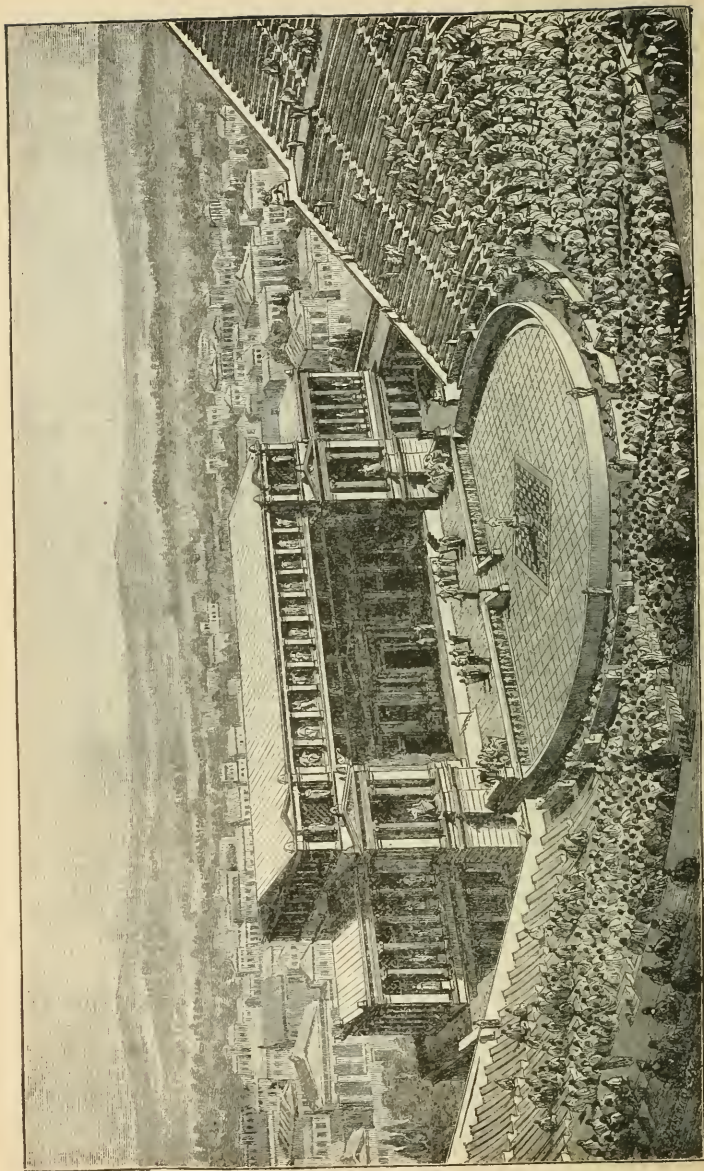
Doric order, of marble from the neighboring Pentelicus. After standing for more than two thousand years, and having served successively as a Pagan temple, a Christian church, and a Mohammedan mosque, it finally was made to serve as a Turkish powder-magazine, in a war with the Venetians, in 1687. During the progress of this contest a bomb fired the magazine, and more than half of this masterpiece of ancient art was shattered into fragments. The front is still quite perfect, and is the most prominent feature of the Acropolis at the present time.



THE PARTHENON (present condition).

**The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus.** — This structure was another of the Seven Wonders of the World. It was a monumental tomb designed to preserve the memory of Mausolus, king of Caria, who died 352 B.C. Its erection was prompted by the love and grief of his wife Artemisia. The combined genius of the most noted artists of the age, among whom was the renowned sculptor Scopas, ex-honor of the patron-goddess of Athens. The larger part of the frieze is now in the British Museum, the Parthenon having been despoiled of its coronal of sculptures by Lord Elgin. Read Lord Byron's *The Curse of Minerva*. To the poet, Lord Elgin's act appeared worse than vandalism.





THE THEATRE OF DIONYSUS AT ATHENS. (A reconstruction.)

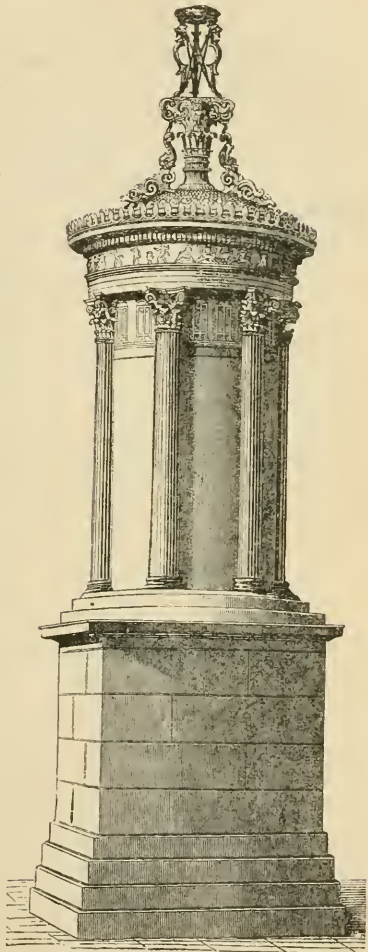
cuted the wish of the queen. From a base about one hundred feet square the monument rose to a height of one hundred and forty feet. Its sides were decorated with a multitude of statues and figures in relief; while surmounting the monument was the statue of Mausolus, standing in a marble chariot drawn by four horses.

The chief remains of the Mausoleum are numerous sculptures dug up on the site, and now preserved in the British Museum. These assure us that the admiration of the ancients was not accorded to this work without sufficient reason. It is the traditions of this beautiful structure that have given the world a name for all magnificent monuments raised to perpetuate the memory of the dead.

#### Theatres and Other Structures.

—The Greek theatre was semi-circular in form, and open to the sky, as shown in the accompanying cut. The structure comprised three divisions: first, the semi-circle of seats for the spectators; second, the orchestra, or dancing-place for the chorus, which embraced the space between the lower range

of seats and the stage; and third, the stage, a narrow platform for the actors.



CHORAGIC MONUMENT OF LYSICRATES.

The most noted of Greek theatres was the Theatre of Dionysus at Athens, which was the model of all the others. It was partly cut in the rock on the southeastern slope of the Acropolis, the Greeks in the construction of their theatres generally taking advantage of a hillside. There were about one hundred rows of seats, the lowest one, bordering the orchestra, consisting of sixty-seven marble arm-chairs. These were brought to light by excavations made in the year 1862. The structure would hold thirty thousand spectators.

Among commemorative edifices raised in honor of the living, the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, at Athens, known also as the Lantern of Diogenes, is regarded as the most beautiful. The structure is only thirty-four feet high. It is of the Corinthian order of architecture, and was intended to commemorate the victory won in 334 B.C. by Lysicrates, the leader (Choragus) of a chorus (see p. 352).

There are no specimens preserved to us of the domestic or palatial architecture of the Greeks.

### III. SCULPTURE AND PAINTING.

**Progress in Sculpture: Influence of the Gymnastic Art.**—The subjects of the Grecian artists were usually taken from the sacred myths and legends. Wood was the material first employed. About the eighth century B.C. bronze and marble were generally substituted for the less durable material. With this change sculpture began to make rapid progress.

Another circumstance aided the development of the art. It became usual to commemorate victories at the national games by statues of the victor. The grounds about the temple at Olympia became crowded with "a band of chosen youth in imperishable forms." Now, in representing the figures of the gods, it was thought, if not impious, at least presumptuous, to change a single line or lineament of the conventional form; and thus a certain

Egyptian rigidity was imparted to all the productions of the artist. Any material change subjected him to the charge of sacrilege. But in the representation of the forms of mere men, the sculptor was bound by no conventionalism, being perfectly free to exercise his skill and genius in handling his subject. Progress and improvement now became possible.

But what exerted the most positive influence upon Greek sculpture was the gymnastic art. The exercises of the gymnasium and the contests of the sacred games afforded the artist unrivalled opportunities for the study of the human form. "The whole race," as Symonds says, "lived out its sculpture and its painting, rehearsed, as it were, the great works of Phidias and Polygnotus, in physical exercises, before it learned to express itself in marble or in color."

As the sacred buildings increased in number and costliness, the services of the artist were called into requisition for their adornment. At first the temple held only the statue of the god; but after a time it became, as we have already seen, a sort of national museum — a repository of the artistic treasures of the state. The entablature, the pediments, the intercolumniations of the building, and every niche of the interior of the shrine, as well as the surrounding grounds and groves, were peopled with statues and groups of figures, executed by the most renowned artists, and representing the national deities, the legendary heroes, victors at



PITCHING THE DISCUS, OR QUOI†  
(Discobolus.)



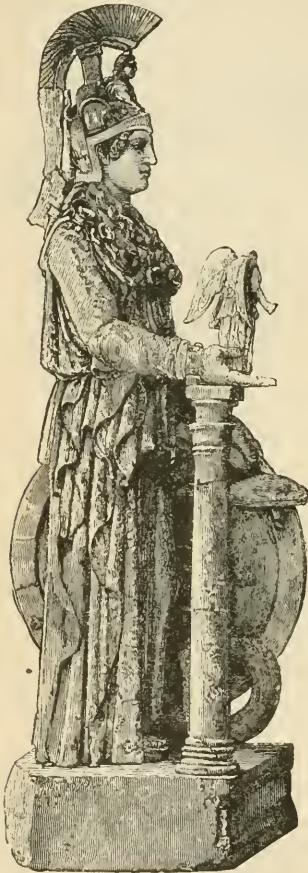
the public games, or incidents in the life of the state in which piety saw the special interposition of the god in whose honor the shrine had been reared.

**Phidias.** — Among all the great sculptors of antiquity, Phidias stands pre-eminent. He was an Athenian, and was born about 488 B.C. He delighted in the beautiful myths and legends of the Heroic Age, and from these he drew subjects for his art.

Phidias being an architect as well as sculptor, his patron Pericles gave into his hands the superintendence of those magnificent buildings with which he persuaded the Athenians to adorn their city. It was his genius that created the wonderful figures of the pediments and the frieze of the Parthenon.

The most celebrated of his colossal sculptures were the statue of Athena within the Parthenon, and that of Olympian Zeus in the temple at Olympia. The statue of Athena was of gigantic size, being about forty feet in height, and was constructed of ivory and gold, the hair, weapons, and drapery being of the latter material. One hand of the goddess rested upon a richly-carved shield, while the other held aloft an ivory statue of Victory, itself a masterpiece. On her feet were golden sandals.

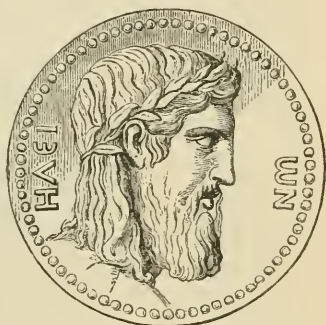
The statue of Olympian Zeus



ATHENA PARTHENOS. (After a statue found at Athens in 1880, which is supposed to be a copy of the colossal statue of Athena by Phidias, described in the text.)

was also of ivory and gold. It was sixty feet high, and represented the god seated on his throne. The hair, beard, and drapery were of gold. The eyes were brilliant stones. Gems of great value decked the throne, and figures of exquisite design were sculptured on the golden robe. The colossal proportions of this wonderful work, as well as the lofty yet benign aspect of the countenance, harmonized well with the popular conception of the majesty and grace of the "father of gods and men." It was thought a great misfortune to die without having seen the Olympian Zeus.<sup>1</sup> The statue was in existence for eight hundred years, being finally destroyed by fire in the fifth century A.D.

Phidias also executed other works in both bronze and marble. He met an unworthy fate. First he was accused of having stolen a part of the gold put in his hands for the statue of Athena in the Parthenon. This charge was disproved by the golden drapery being taken from the statue and weighed. Then he was prosecuted on another charge. Upon the famous shield at the feet of the statue of Athena in the Par-



HEAD OF THE OLYMPIAN ZEUS BY PHIDIAS.

<sup>1</sup> "Phidias avowed that he took his idea from the representation which Homer gives in the first book of the *Iliad* in the passage thus translated by Pope: —

' He spake, and awful bends his sable brow,  
Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod,  
The stamp of fate and sanction of the god.  
High heaven with reverence the dread signal took,  
And all Olympus to the centre shook.' "

BULFINCH'S *Age of Fable*, p. 404.

When Phidias had finished his work, so tradition tells, he prayed Zeus to give a token if the statue pleased him. Straightway a thunderbolt from heaven fell upon the temple floor, by which sign Phidias knew that his work was accepted.



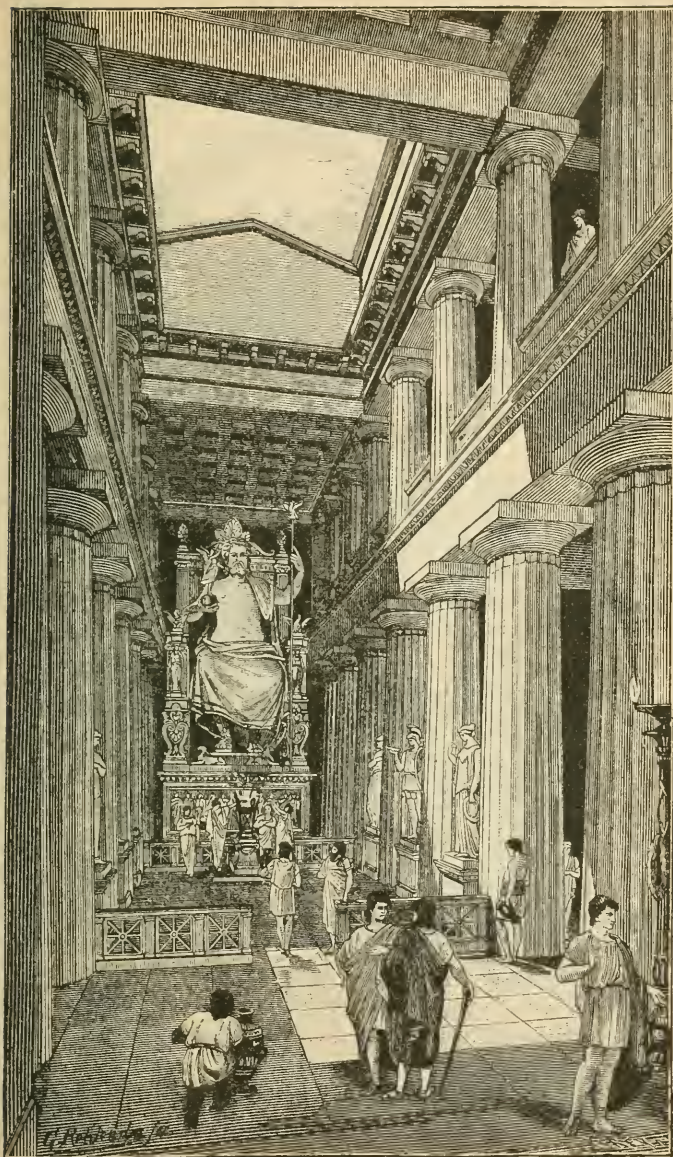
thenon, among the figures in the representation of a battle between the Athenians and the Amazons, Phidias introduced a portrait of himself and also one of his patron Pericles. That of himself was the figure of a "bald old man" just in the act of hurling a huge rock. The enemies of the artist, prompted by jealousy, caused him to be prosecuted for his presumption, which was considered an act of sacrilege. He died in prison (432 B.C.).

**Polycletus.** — At the same time that Phidias was executing his ideal representations of the gods, Polycletus the elder, whose home was at Argos, was producing his renowned bronze statues of athletes. Among his pieces was one representing a spear-bearer, which was regarded as so perfect as to be known as "the Rule."

Polycletus also executed some statues of gods and heroes, among which his "Hera" is celebrated; in this field, however, his fame was eclipsed by that of Phidias.

**Praxiteles.** — This artist, after Polycletus, stands next to Phidias as one of the most eminent of Greek sculptors. His works were executed during the fourth century B.C. Among his chief pieces may be mentioned the "Cnidian Aphrodite," the "Satyr," "Eros," and "Hermes." The first of these, which stood in the Temple of Aphrodite at Cnidus, was regarded by the ancients as the most perfect embodiment of the goddess of beauty. Long pilgrimages were made from distant countries to Cnidus for the sake of looking upon the matchless statue. Many copies were set up in different cities. About two centuries ago, excavations at Rome brought to light a beautiful statue, supposed to be a copy of the original Cnidian Aphrodite, by Cleomenes, who lived during the first or second century B.C. This is the so-called "Venus de' Medici," copies of which are in all our homes. The name comes from the circumstance of the statue having been kept for some time after its discovery in the palace of the Medici at Rome.

To Praxiteles is also sometimes ascribed the celebrated group representing the Niobe myth. (By some this work is attributed to Scopas, one of the sculptors of the figures of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.) The original work, which was transported from



INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ZEUS AT OLYMPIA.  
(Reconstructed by G. Rehlender.)

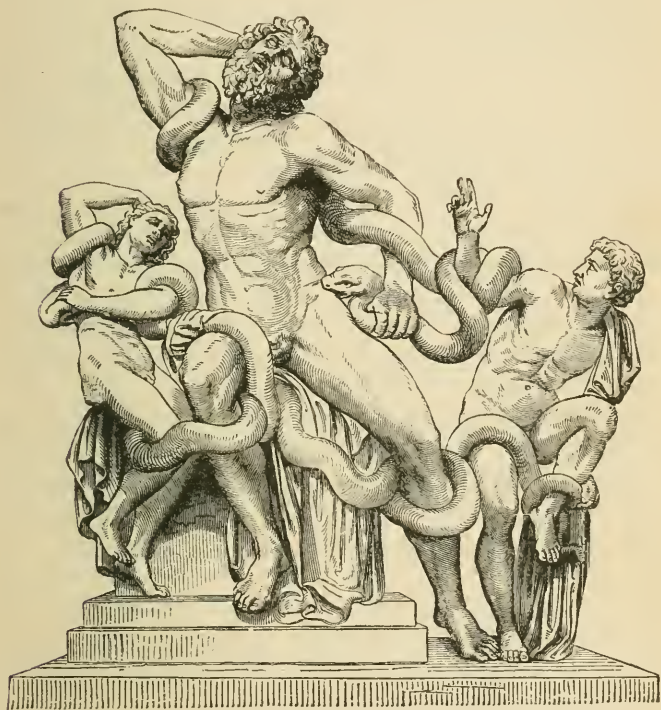
Asia Minor to Rome probably about 35 B.C., has perished; the well-known group at Florence is a Roman copy.

**Lysippus.** — This artist, a native of Sicyon, is renowned for his works in bronze. He flourished about the middle of the fourth century B.C. His statues were in great demand. More than six hundred pieces of his work were to be counted in the different cities of Hellas. Many of these were of colossal size. Alexander gave the artist many orders for statues of himself, and also of the heroes that fell in his campaigns.

**Chares and the Rhodian Colossus.** — Lysippus, like all men of great genius in any art or science, had many disciples and left many imitators. The most noted of his pupils was Chares, who gave the world the celebrated Colossus at Rhodes (about 280 B.C.). This was another of the Seven Wonders of the World. Its height was one hundred and seven feet, and a man could barely encircle with his arms the thumb of the statue. The expense of its erection (about \$500,000) was met by the sale of spoils obtained by the Rhodians in war. After standing little more than half a century, it was overthrown by an earthquake. For nine hundred years the Colossus then lay, like a Homeric god, prone upon the ground. Finally, the Arabs, having overrun this part of the Orient (A.D. 672), appropriated the statue, and thriftily sold it to a Jewish merchant. It is said that it required a train of nine hundred camels to bear away the bronze.

This gigantic piece of statuary was not a solitary one at Rhodes; for that city, next after Athens, was the great art centre of the Grecian world. Its streets and gardens and public edifices were literally crowded with statues. Hundreds met the eye on every hand. The island became the favorite resort of artists, and the various schools there founded acquired a wide renown. Very many of the most prized works of Grecian art in our modern museums were executed by members of these Rhodian schools. The "Laocoön Group," found at Rome in 1506, and now in the Museum of the Vatican, is generally thought to be the work of three Rhodian sculptors — Agesander, Athenodorus, and Polydo-

rus. The order for the work was probably given by the Roman emperor Titus (A.D. 79–81), as the group adorned his palace on one of the hills of Rome.



THE LAOCOÖN GROUP.

**Greek Painting.** — Although the Greek artists attained a high degree of excellence in painting, still they never brought the art to that perfection which they reached in sculpture. One reason for this less perfect development of the art was that paintings were



never, like statues, objects of adoration ; hence less attention was directed to them.<sup>1</sup>

With the exception of antique vases and a few patches of mural decoration, all specimens of Greek painting have perished. Not a single work of any great painter of antiquity has survived the accidents of time. Consequently our knowledge of Greek painting is derived chiefly from the descriptions of renowned works, by the ancient writers, and their anecdotes of great painters. These classical stories are always epigrams of criticism, and thus possess a technical as well as literary and historical value. For this reason, we shall repeat some of them.

**Polygnotus.** — Polygnotus (flourished 475-455 B.C.) has been called the Prometheus of painting, because he was the first to give fire and animation to the expression of the countenance. "In his hand," it is affirmed, "the human features became for the first time the mirror of the soul." Of a Polyxena,<sup>2</sup> painted by this great master, it was said that "she carried in her eyelids the whole history of the Trojan War."

The Athenians conferred upon Polygnotus the rights of citizenship, and he out of gratitude painted upon the walls of some of their public buildings the grandest frescoes the world had ever looked upon. The fall of Ilium and the battle of Marathon were among the subjects he represented.

**Zeuxis and Parrhasius.** — These great artists lived and painted about 400 B.C. A favorite and familiar story preserves their names as companions, and commemorates their rival genius. Zeuxis, such is the story, painted a cluster of grapes which so closely imitated the real fruit that the birds pecked at them. His rival, for his piece, painted a curtain. Zeuxis asked Parrhasius to draw aside the veil and exhibit his picture. "I confess I am surpassed,"

<sup>1</sup> The influence of religion upon art is illustrated by the Italian Renaissance, when painting entered the service of the Church. See *Mediæval and Modern History*, pp. 345, 346.

<sup>2</sup> Polyxena was a daughter of the Trojan Priam, famous for her beauty and sufferings. She was sacrificed as an atonement to the shade of Achilles.

generously admitted Zeuxis to his rival. "I deceived birds, but you have deceived the eyes of an experienced artist."

Zeuxis executed orders for paintings for sacred buildings in Greece and Italy, for his fame was not confined to a single land. In his latter years he refused all remuneration for his pieces, esteeming them beyond price in money. A very improbable story is told of his having "died with laughter at a picture of an old woman which he himself had painted."

**Apelles.** — Apelles, who has been called the "Raphaël of antiquity," was the court-painter of Alexander the Great. He was such a consummate master of the art of painting, and carried it to such a state of perfection, that the ancient writers spoke of it as the "art of Apelles." His most celebrated painting was a representation of Aphrodite just at the moment the goddess is rising from the sea-foam. Centuries after the death of Apelles this painting was carried off to Italy by the Roman conquerors, and for a time adorned a temple at Rome, erected in honor of Julius Cæsar.

Several well-worn stories illustrative of the estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries are told of Apelles. Entering one day the studio of the artist Protogenes, and finding him absent, instead of leaving his name, he drew, with his own inimitable grace, a single line upon a canvas, and then withdrew. When Protogenes returned, and his eye caught the line, he exclaimed that no hand but that of Apelles ever drew such a stroke. But in attempting to imitate it, he perceived that he had himself surpassed it; and, with a natural pride in his success, he instructed his servant, upon the return of the stranger, to direct his attention to the line. Calling a second time, Apelles was shown what his rival had done. Thereupon he drew a third line that far surpassed either of the other two. Upon beholding it, Protogenes rushed forth into the city in search of Apelles, for whom he ever after evinced the warmest friendship, combined with the greatest admiration.

A second tale is told respecting a contest between Apelles and some rival artists, in which horses were the objects represented.



Perceiving that the judges were unfriendly to him, and partial, Apelles insisted that less prejudiced judges should pronounce upon the merit of the respective pieces, demanding, at the same time, that the paintings should be shown to some horses that were near. When brought before the pictures of his rival, the horses exhibited no concern; but upon being shown the painting of Apelles, they manifested by neighing and other intelligent signs their instant recognition of the companions the great master had created.

Still another anecdote has given the world one of its best proverbs. A cobbler criticised the shoe-latchet of one of the artist's figures. Apelles, recognizing that what had caught the practised eye of the man was a real defect, straightway amended it. Then the cobbler ventured to offer some criticisms on one of the legs. Thereupon Apelles sharply rebuked him for passing beyond his province, by replying, "Cobbler, keep to your last."

In the hands of Apelles Greek painting attained its highest excellence. After him the art declined, and no other really great name appears.

NOTE. — Excavations carried on, with some intermissions, from 1878 to 1886, upon the Acropolis of the ancient Pergamus, in Asia Minor, resulted in the discovery of a great Altar, and a large number of gigantic sculptures in high relief, which decorated the four sides of the foundation of the structure. The subject of the representation was the Battle of the Giants against the Gods. The Altar is supposed to have been built by King Eumenes II. (197–159 B.C.). The sculptures are now to be seen in the Berlin Museum, though they have not yet been placed in permanent position. Taken as a whole they may, perhaps, in the series of Greek sculptural monuments remaining to us, be given a place second to the Phidian sculptures of the Athenian Parthenon. Consult *Beschreibung der pergamenischen Bildwerke*, official publication of the Berlin Museum.

312 = 307

## CHAPTER XI.

## GREEK LITERATURE.

## I. INTRODUCTORY.

**Excellence of Greek Literature.** — In literature the Greeks far surpassed every other people of antiquity. The degree of excellence attained by them in poetry, in oratory, and in history has scarcely been surpassed by any modern people or race. Here, as in art, they are still the teachers of the world.

**The Greeks as Literary Artists.** — It was that same exquisite sense of fitness and proportion and beauty which made the Greeks artists in marble that also made them artists in Language. “Of all the beautiful things which they created,” says Professor Jebb, “their own language was the most beautiful.” This language they wrought into epics and lyrics and dramas and histories and orations, as incomparable in form and beauty as their temples and statues. The excellences of Greek literature — fitness, symmetry, proportion, clearness of outline — are the same as those that characterize Greek art.

Even the Greek philosophers arranged and expressed their ideas and speculations with such regard to the rules of literary art, that many of their productions are fairly entitled to a place in literature proper. Especially is this true of the earlier Greek philosophers, who wrote in hexameter verse, and of Plato, in whose works the profoundest speculations are embodied in the most perfect literary form. But as Greek philosophy, viewed as a system of thought, had a development distinct from that of Greek literature proper, we shall deal with it in a separate chapter, contenting ourselves here with merely pointing out the unusually

close connection in ancient Greece between Philosophy and Literature.

**Periods of Greek Literature.** — Greek literature, for the time covered by our history, is usually divided into three periods, as follows: (1) The Period before 475 B.C.; (2) The Attic or Golden Age (475–300 B.C.); (3) The Alexandrian Age (300–146 B.C.).

The first period gave birth to epic and lyric poetry; the second, to history, oratory, and above all to dramatic literature; while the third period was one of decline, during which the productions of the preceding epochs were worked over and commented upon, or feebly imitated. Occasionally, however, a gleam of real genius brings back for a moment the splendors of the departing day.

## II. THE PERIOD BEFORE 475 B.C.

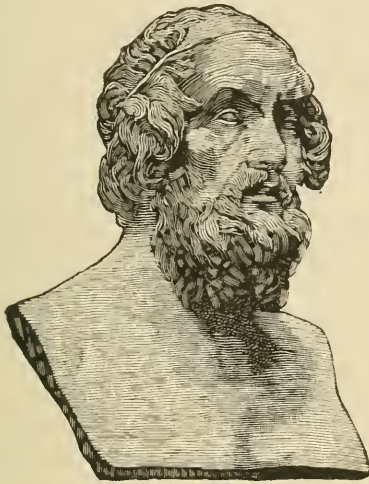
**The Homeric Poems.** — The earliest specimens of Greek poetry are the so-called “Homeric poems,” consisting of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The subject of the *Iliad* is the “Wrath of Achilles,” and the woes it brought upon the Greeks who pressed the siege of Ilios or Troy. The *Odyssey* tells of the long wanderings of the hero Odysseus (Ulysses) up and down over many seas while seeking his native Ithaca, after the downfall of Ilios.

The first poem, which is by far the superior of the two, must be pronounced “the masterpiece of Greek literature; perhaps of all literatures.” Before being committed to writing, it had probably been preserved and transmitted orally for several generations. It has been translated into all languages, and has been read with an ever fresh interest by generation after generation for nearly three thousand years. Alexander, it is told, slept with a copy beneath his pillow, — a copy prepared especially for him by his preceptor Aristotle, and called the “casket edition,” from the jewelled box in which Alexander is said to have kept it. We preserve it quite as sacredly in all our courses of classical study.

The age in which the poem was written has been called the Childhood of the World. The work is characterized by the fresh-

ness and vitality of youth. It exerted an incalculable influence upon the literary and religious life of the Hellenic race. It has made warriors as well as poets, for many of its passages are instinct with the martial spirit. It incited the military ambition of Alexander, of Hannibal, and of Cæsar; it inspired Virgil, Dante, and Milton. All epic writers have taken it as their model.

**Date and Authorship of the Homeric Poems.** — Until the rise of modern German criticism, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were almost



HOMER.

universally ascribed to a single bard named Homer, who was believed to have lived about the middle of the ninth or tenth century B.C., one or two centuries after the events commemorated in his poems. Though tradition represents many cities as contending for the honor of having been his birthplace, still he was generally regarded as a native of Smyrna, in Asia Minor. He travelled widely (so it was believed), lost his sight, and then, as a wandering minstrel, sang his immortal verses to admiring listeners in the different cities of Hellas.

But at the close of the last century (in 1795) the German scholar Wolf, after a critical study of the two Homeric poems, declared that they were not, either of them, the work of a single poet, but that each was made up of a large number of earlier short lays, or ballads. The work of uniting these separate pieces into the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, he believed to have been performed under the direction of the Tyrant Pisistratus (see p. 204).

Wolf's theory opened a great "Battle of the Books." Since his day there has been no lull in the so-called "Homeric controversy." The following are the pretty generally acknowledged results thus far of the great debate: The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as they stand to-day, are not, either of them, the creation of a single poet. They are mosaics; that is, they are built up out of fragments of an extensive ballad literature that grew up in an age preceding the Homeric. The extent, variety, and beauty of this pre-Homeric literature implies a very long period of Hellenic development lying back of the age that produced the Homeric poems.

The *Iliad* is the older of the two poems. It is made up of two epics, the "Wrath of Achilles" and the "Doom of Ilios," the former of which is by far the more archaic. Each of these earlier epics was itself made up of still earlier lays. The "Wrath of Achilles," which forms the nucleus of the *Iliad* as we have it, may, with very great probability, be ascribed to Homer, whom we may believe to have been one, and that the most prominent, of a brotherhood of bards, or rhapsodists, who flourished about 850 or 750 B.C.

The *Odyssey* is probably a century later than the *Iliad*. The unity of the poem is greater than that of the *Iliad*, and it bears so plainly the impression of a single great mind, that we may well believe it to be essentially the work of a single bard, instead of a band, or fraternity, of poets. But the theory of the single authorship of the *Odyssey* does not imply that the entire contents of the poem were the creation of a single mind. Like the *Iliad*, as already affirmed, it was made up of pre-existing lays, or epics, welded together.

**The Hesiodic Poems.** — Hesiod, who lived a century or more after the age that gave birth to the Homeric poems, was the poet of nature and of real life, especially of peasant life, in the dim transition age of Hellas. The Homeric bards sing of the deeds of heroes, and of a far-away time when gods mingled with men. Hesiod sings of common men, and of every-day, present duties. His greatest poem, a didactic epic, is entitled *Works and Days*. This is, in the main, a sort of farmer's calendar, in which the poet points out to the husbandman the lucky and unlucky days for doing certain kinds of work, gives him minute instructions respecting farm labor, descants upon justice, eulogizes industry, and intersperses among all his practical lines homely maxims of morality and beautiful descriptive passages of the changing seasons. Virgil's *Georgics* was based upon the *Works and Days*.

Another work called the *Theogony* is also usually ascribed to Hesiod. This poem has been well described as being "an authorized version of the genealogy of the Greek gods and heroes."

**Lyric Poetry: Pindar.** — As epic poetry, represented by the Homeric and Hesiodic poems, was the characteristic production of the earlier part of the first period of Greek Literature, so was lyric poetry the most noteworthy product of the latter part of the period.

The Æolian island of Lesbos was the hearth and home of the earlier lyric poets. The songs of these Lesbian bards fairly glow and quiver with ardent passion. Among the earliest of these singers were Alcæus and Sappho. No higher praise of Alcæus is needed than mention of the fact that the Roman poet Horace was so pleased with his verses that he borrowed sometimes entire odes of the Lesbian bard.

The poetess Sappho was exalted by the Greeks to a place next to Homer. Plato calls her the Tenth Muse. "Of all the poets of the world," writes Symonds, "of all the illustrious artists of literature, Sappho is the one whose every word has a peculiar and unmistakable perfume, a seal of absolute and inimitable grace." Although her fame endures, her poetry, except some mere fragments, has perished.



Anacreon was a courtier at the time of the Greek tyrannies. He was a native of Ionia, but passed much of his time at the court of Polycrates of Samos, and at that of the Tyrant Hipparchus at Athens. He seems to have enjoyed to the full the gay and easy life of a courtier, and sung so voluptuously of love and wine and festivity that the term "Anacreontic" has come to be used to characterize all poetry over-redolent of these themes.

Simonides of Ceos (556-468 B.C.) lived during the Persian Wars. He composed immortal couplets for the monuments of the fallen heroes of Thermopylæ and Salamis. These epigrams were burned into the very soul of every person in Hellas.

But the greatest of the Greek lyric poets, and perhaps the greatest of all lyric poets of every age and race, was Pindar (about 522-443 B.C.). He was born at Thebes, but spent most of his time in the cities of Magna Græcia. Such was the reverence in which his memory was held that when Alexander, one hundred years after Pindar's time, levelled the city of Thebes to the ground on account of a revolt, the house of the poet was spared, and left standing amid the general ruin. The greater number of Pindar's poems were inspired by the scenes of the national festivals. They describe in lofty strains the splendors of the Olympian chariot-races, or the glory of the victors at the Isthmian, the Nemean, or the Pythian games.

Pindar insists strenuously upon virtue and self-culture. With deep meaning, he says, "Become that which thou art"; that is, be that which you are made to be.

### III. THE ATTIC OR GOLDEN AGE (475-300 B.C.).

**Influences Favorable to a Great Literature.**—The Golden Age of Greek Literature followed the Persian Wars, and was, in a large measure, produced by them. Every great literary outburst is the result of a profound stirring of the depths of national life. All Hellas had been profoundly moved by the tremendous struggle for political existence. Athens especially had hoped all, risked

all, achieved all. Her citizens now felt an unwonted exaltation of life. Hence Athens naturally becomes the home and center of the literary activity of the period.

The Attic Literature embraces almost every specimen of composition, yet the Drama, History, and Oratory are its most characteristic forms. Especially favorable were the influences of the time for the production of great dramatic works. The two conditions, "intense activity and an appreciative audience," without which, it is asserted, a great drama cannot exist, met in the age of Pericles. Hence the unrivalled excellence of the Attic drama, the noblest production of the artistic genius of the Greeks.

### *The Greek Drama and Dramatists.*

**Origin of the Greek Drama.** — The Greek drama, in both its branches of tragedy and comedy, grew out of the songs and dances instituted in honor of the god of wine — Dionysus.<sup>1</sup>



BACCHIC PROCESSION.

Tragedy (goat-song, possibly from the accompanying sacrifice of a goat) sprang from the graver songs, and comedy (village-song) from the lighter and more farcical ones. Gradually, recital and dialogue were added, there being at first but a single speaker, then two, and finally three, which last was the classical number.

<sup>1</sup> The same as the Roman Bacchus.

Thespis (about 536 B.C.) is said to have introduced this idea of the dialogue, hence the term "Thespian" applied to the tragic drama.

Owing to its origin, the Greek drama always retained a religious character, and further, presented two distinct features, the chorus (the songs and dances) and the dialogue. At first, the chorus was the all-important part; but later, the dialogue became the more prominent portion, the chorus, however, always remaining an essential feature of the performance. Finally, in the golden age of the Attic stage, the chorus dancers and singers were carefully trained, at great expense, and the dialogue became the masterpiece of some great poet, — and then the Greek drama, the most splendid creation of human genius, was complete.

**The Subjects of the Tragic Poets.** — The tragic poets of Athens drew the material of their plays chiefly from the myths and legends of the heroic age, just as Shakespeare for many of his plays used the legends of the semi-historical periods of his own country or of other countries. These legendary tales they handled freely, so changing, coloring, and moralizing them as to render them the vehicle for the conveying of great ethical lessons, or of profound philosophical ideas regarding the divine government of the world. Indeed, the mission of the tragic poets was to harmonize the fuller knowledge, the truer religious feeling of the age, with the ancient traditions and myths, — to reveal the ethical truth which the old stories of the gods and heroes contained, or which they might be made to symbolize.

**The Leading Idea of Greek Tragedy.** — Symonds believes the fundamental idea of Greek tragedy to be the Doctrine of Nemesis. This doctrine seems to have been evolved out of the old idea of the Divine Jealousy (see p. 184). Just as we have softened and moralized the old Hebrew idea that all suffering is Divine punishment for sin, evolving from it the Christian doctrine of affliction, which regards a large part of human pains and sufferings, not as penal inflictions, but rather as trials intended as a means of spiritual development; in like manner the Greeks moralized their unethical views of the cause of sudden reverses of fortune, of sud-

den downfalls, and came to hold the doctrine that it is not mere prosperity itself which arouses the anger and opposition of the gods, but the pride and arrogance usually engendered in mortals by over-great prosperity.

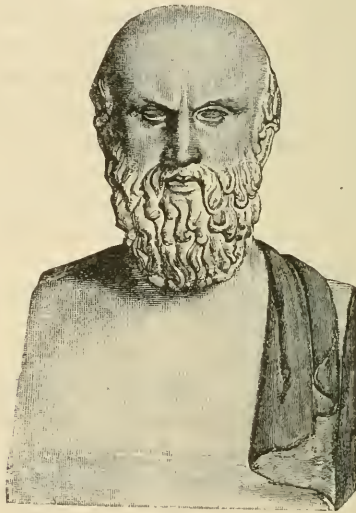
To understand how the Greeks should have come to regard insolent self-assertion, or the unrestrained indulgence of appetite or passion as the most heinous of sins, we must recall once more the legend upon the front of the Delphian temple — “Measure in all things.” As proportion was the cardinal element of beauty in art, so wise moderation was the prime quality in virtue. Those who moderated not their desire of fame, of wealth, of dominion, were the most impious of men, and all such the avenging Nemesis failed not to bring, through their own mad presumption and overvaulting ambition, to overwhelming and irretrievable ruin. The results of the Persian war confirmed the Greeks in this view of the moral government of the world; for had not they themselves seen most signally punished the unbridled ambition, the insolence, the presumptuous impiety, of the scourgers of the Hellespont and the destroyers of the temples of the gods?

We shall see in a moment how this idea inspired some of the greatest of the Greek dramas.

**The Three Great Tragic Poets.** — There are three great names in Greek tragedy, — Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. These dramatists all wrote during the splendid period which followed the victories of the Persian war, when the intellectual life of all Hellas, and especially that of Athens, was strung to the highest tension. This lent nervous power and intensity to almost all they wrote, particularly to the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles. Of the two hundred and fifty-eight dramas produced by these poets, only thirty-two have come down to us; all the others have perished through the accidents of time.

Æschylus (525-456 B.C.) was more than Shakespearian in the gloom and intensity of his tragedies. He knew how to touch the hearts of the generation that had won the victories of the Persian war; for he had fought with honor both at Marathon and at Sala-

mis. But it was on a very different arena that he was destined to win his most enduring fame. Eleven times did he carry off the prize in tragic composition. The Athenians called him the "Father of Tragedy." *Prometheus Bound* is one of his chief works—"one of the boldest and most original dramas," Ranke declares, "that have ever been written." The old Promethean myth which Æschylus makes the ground-work of this tragedy was immoral; that is, it represents the Supreme Zeus as treating the Titan arbitrarily and unjustly.<sup>1</sup> But Æschylus moralizes the tale. He makes prom-



ÆSCHYLUS.

inent Prometheus' faults of impatience and self-will, and shows that his sufferings are but the just penalty of his presumption and self-assertion.

<sup>1</sup> In punishment for having stolen fire from heaven and given it to men, and for having taught them the arts of life, the Titan Prometheus is chained by Zeus to a lonely cliff on the remote shores of the Euxine, and an eagle is sent to feed upon his liver, which each night grows anew.

Another of the great tragedies of Æschylus is his *Agamemnon*, thought by some to be his masterpiece. The subject is the crime of Clytæmnestra (see p. 168). It is a tragedy crowded with spirit-shaking terrors, and filled with more than human crimes and woes. Nowhere is portrayed with greater power the awful vengeance with which the implacable Nemesis is armed.<sup>1</sup>

The theme of Æschylus' *Persæ* was the defeat of Xerxes and his host, which afforded the poet a good opportunity "to state his philosophy of Nemesis, here being a splendid tragic instance of pride humbled, of greatness brought to nothing, through one man's impiety and pride." The poet teaches that "no mortal may dare raise his heart too high," — that "Zeus tames excessive lifting up of heart."

Sophocles (495-405 B.C.) while yet a youth gained the prize in a poetic contest with Æschylus (468 B.C.), Cimon being the chief umpire. Plutarch says that Æschylus was so chagrined by his defeat that he left Athens and retired to Sicily. Sophocles now became the leader of tragedy at Athens. In almost every contest he carried away the first prize. He lived through nearly a century, a century, too, that comprised the most brilliant period of the life of Hellas. His dramas were perfect works of art.

The central idea of his dramas is the same as that which characterizes those of Æschylus; namely, that self-will and insolent pride arouse the righteous indignation of the gods, and that no mortal can contend successfully against the will of Zeus. His chief works are *Œdipus Tyrannus*, *Œdipus Coloneus*, and (probably) *Antigone*, all of which are founded upon the old tales of the royal line of Thebes (see p. 164).

Euripides (485-406 B.C.) was a more popular dramatist than

<sup>1</sup> The *Agamemnon* forms the first of a *trilogy*: that is, a series of three dramas, the other pieces being entitled the *Chaphoræ* and the *Eumenides*. These continue the subject of the *Agamemnon*, so that the three really form a single drama or story. On the Greek stage, the several parts of the trilogy were performed successively the same day. This trilogy of Æschylus is the only one from the ancient stage of which all the parts have come down to us.



either Æschylus or Sophocles. Æschylus was too lofty, severe, and earnest a poet to be long a favorite with the volatile and pleasure-loving Athenians. They tired of him as they did of Aris-



SOPHOCLES.

tides. Nor was Sophocles sensational enough to please them, after the state of exalted religious feeling awakened by the tremendous experiences of the Persian war had passed away. Euripides was a better representative than either of these of the Athenian in

his normal mood. The Athenian cared more for æsthetics than ethics.

The fame of Euripides passed far beyond the limits of Greece. Herodotus asserts that the verses of the poet were recited by the natives of the remote country of Gedrosia ; and Plutarch says that the Sicilians were so fond of his lines that many of the Athenian prisoners, taken before Syracuse, bought their liberty by teaching their masters such of his verses as they could repeat from memory. Euripides is said to have written nearly one hundred plays, of which number, however, only seventeen remain to us. Almost all of these are based on incidents detailed in the Argonautic, Theban, and Trojan legends.

**Comedy: Aristophanes.** — Foremost among all writers of comedy must be placed Aristophanes (about 444–380 B.C.). He introduces us to the every-day life of the least admirable classes of Athenian society. Four of his most noted works are the *Clouds*, the *Knights*, the *Birds*, and the *Wasps*.

In the comedy of the *Clouds*, Aristophanes especially ridicules the Sophists, a school of philosophers and teachers just then rising into prominence at Athens, of whom the satirist unfairly makes Socrates the representative. But the points of the play were susceptible of a general application. "Everything that deceived, concealed, shifted, eluded, was symbolized by clouds."

The aim of the *Knights* was the punishment and ruin of Cleon, whom we already know as one of the most conceited and insolent of the demagogues of Athens.

The play of the *Birds* is "the everlasting allegory of foolish sham and flimsy ambition." "Cloud-Cuckootown," we quote the critic Symonds, "is any castle in the air or South Sea Bubble which might take the fancy of the Athenian mob." But while having a general application, it was aimed particularly at the ambitious Sicilian schemes of Alcibiades ; for at the time the play appeared, the Athenian army was before Syracuse, and elated by the good news daily arriving, the Athenians were building the most gorgeous air-castles, and indulging in the most extravagant day-dreams of universal dominion.

In the *Wasps*, the poet satirizes the proceedings in the Athenian law-courts, by showing how the great citizen-juries were befooled by the demagogues.

But Aristophanes was something more than a master of mere mirth-provoking satire and ridicule: along with his exquisite sense of the humorous he possessed a nature most delicately sensitive to the finer emotions. Many of the choruses of his pieces are inexpressibly tender and beautiful.<sup>1</sup>

### *History and Historians.*

✓ Poetry is the first form of literary expression among all peoples. So we must not be surprised to find that it was not until several centuries after the composition of the Homeric poems — that is, about the sixth century B.C. — that prose-writing appeared among the Greeks. Historical composition was then first cultivated. We

can speak briefly of only three historians — Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon — whose names were cherished among the ancients, and whose writings are highly valued and carefully studied by ourselves.



HERODOTUS.

**Herodotus.** — Herodotus (about 484-402 B.C.), born at Halicarnassus, in Asia Minor, is called the “Father of History.” He travelled over much of the then known world; visited Italy, Egypt, and Babylonia; and describes as an eye-witness, with a never-failing vivacity and freshness, the wonders of the different lands he had seen. Herodotus lived in a story-telling age, and he is himself an inimitable story-teller.

To him we are indebted for a large part of the tales of antiquity — stories of men and events which we never tire of repeating. He was over-credulous, and was often

<sup>1</sup> *Menander* (342-292 B.C.). — Menander was, after Aristophanes, the most noted of Greek comic poets. He was the leader of what is known as the New Comedy. His plays were very popular with the Romans.

imposed upon by his guides in Egypt and at Babylon; but he describes with great care and accuracy what he himself saw. It is sometimes very difficult, however, to determine just what he actually did see with his own eyes and experience in his own person; for it seems certain that, following the custom of the story-tellers of his time, he often related as his own personal adventures the experiences of others, yet with no thought of deceiving. In this he might be likened to our modern writers of historical romances.

The central theme of his great History is the Persian wars, the struggle between Asia and Greece. Around this he groups the several stories of the nations of antiquity. In the pictures which the artist-historian draws, we see vividly contrasted, as in no other writings, the East and the West, Persia and Hellas.

The fundamental idea of the whole history, the conception which shapes and colors the main narrative, is the same as that which inspires the tragedies of Æschylus — the doctrine of Nemesis. This is expressed in the admonition which Artabanus is represented as giving to his nephew Xerxes, when the king was meditating his expedition against Greece: "The god loves to cut down all towering things . . . the god suffers none but himself to be haughty. Rash haste ever goes before a fall; but self-restraint brings blessings, not seen at the moment perhaps, yet found out in due time."<sup>1</sup> Possessed by this idea, the historian becomes a dramatist, and his history a world-tragedy. In the ethical lesson it teaches, it is practically an expansion of the Æschylean drama of the *Persæ*.

Besides this leading Herodotean idea of Nemesis, there are two other important conceptions entering into the historian's philosophy of the universe. These are the notion of the Divine Envy (see p. 183), and the general doctrine of the interference of the gods in human affairs. Herodotus had a naïve belief in omens, oracles, and miracles generally, and this leads him constantly to attribute to preternatural causes the most ordinary events of his-

<sup>1</sup> *Herodotus*, Book VII. chap. 10. Quoted by Professor Jebb, *Greek Literature*, p. 105.

tory. His belief in the old immoral doctrine of the Envy of the Gods, — which he retains along with his maturer views of Nemesis, — causes him to delight in telling stories illustrative of the vicissitudes of life and the instability of fortune, as witness his tales of Cræsus and Polycrates (see pp. 131, 188, *note*).

**Thucydides.** — Thucydides (about 471–400 B.C.), though not so popular an historian as Herodotus, was a much more philosophical one. He was born near Athens. A pretty story is told of his youth, which must be repeated, though critics have pronounced it fabulous. The tale is that Thucydides, when only fifteen, was taken by his father to hear Herodotus recite his history at the Olympian games, and that the reading and the accompanying applause caused the boy to shed tears, and to resolve to become an historian.



THUCYDIDES.

Thucydides was engaged in military service during the first years of the Peloponnesian War; but, on account of his being unfortunate, possibly through his own neglect, the Athenians deprived him of his command, and he went into an exile of twenty years. It is to this circumstance that we are indebted for his invaluable *History of the War between the Peloponnesians and Athenians*.

Through the closest observation and study, he qualified himself to become the historian of what he from the first foresaw would prove a memorable war. “I lived,” he says, “through its whole extent, in the very flower of my understanding and strength, and with a close application of my thoughts, to gain an exact insight into all its occurrences.” He died before his task was completed. The work is considered a model of historical writing. In fairness, truthfulness, clearness, and philosophical insight, Thucydides has never been surpassed as a narrator and interpreter of events. Demosthenes read and re-read his writings to improve his own style; and the greatest orators and historians of modern times have been equally diligent students of the work of the great Athenian.



**Xenophon.** — Xenophon (about 445–355 B.C.) was an Athenian, and is known both as a general and a writer. The works that render his name so familiar are his *Anabasis*, a simple yet thrilling narrative of the retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks; and his *Memorabilia*, or Recollections of Socrates. This work by his devoted yet by no means brilliant pupil is the most faithful portraiture that we possess of that philosopher.

Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, or *Education of Cyrus*, is essentially an historical romance, which portrays not alone the youth, but the whole life of Cyrus the Great, besides delineating the manners and institutions of the Persians. It has been classed with Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia*.

#### Oratory. ✓

**Influence of the Public Assembly.** — The art of oratory among the Greeks was fostered and developed by the democratic character of their institutions. In the public assemblies all questions that concerned the state were discussed and decided. The debates, as we have seen, were, in the democratic cities, open to all. The gift of eloquence secured for its possessor a sure pre-eminence, and conferred a certain leadership in the affairs of state. The law-courts, too, especially the great jury courts of Athens, were schools of oratory; for every citizen was obliged to be his own advocate and to defend his own case.<sup>1</sup> Hence the attention bestowed upon public speaking, and the high degree of perfection attained by the Greeks in the difficult art of persuasion. "It was the prevalence of the habit of public speaking," says Grote, "that was one of the principal causes of the intellectual eminence of the nation generally." Almost all the prominent Athenian statesmen were masters of oratory.

<sup>1</sup>The oratory of the Athenian law-courts was not always, it must be confessed, of a very high order. To move the sympathies of the jurors, the speakers too often had recourse to the low arts of the demagogue. Yet in general these courts certainly developed a popular taste and aptitude for public speaking.



**Themistocles and Pericles.** — We have already become acquainted with Themistocles and Pericles as statesmen and leaders of Athenian affairs during the most stirring period of Athens' history. They both were also great orators, though they are not generally classed with the orators of Greece,<sup>1</sup> and to that fact were largely, if not chiefly, indebted for their power and influence. Thucydides has preserved the oration delivered by Pericles in commemoration of those who fell in the first year of the Peloponnesian War.<sup>2</sup> It is an incomparable picture of the beauty and glory of Athens at the zenith of her power, and has been pronounced one of the finest productions of antiquity. The language of the address, as we have it, is the historian's, but the sentiments are doubtless those of the great statesman. It was the habit of Thucydides to put speeches into the mouths of his characters.

**Demosthenes and Æschines.** — It has been the fortune of Demosthenes (385–322 B.C.) to have his name become throughout the world the synonym of eloquence. The labors and struggles by which, according to tradition, he achieved excellence in his art are held up anew to each generation of youth as guides of the path to success. His first address before the public assembly was a complete failure, owing to defects of voice and manner. With indomitable will he set himself to the task of correcting these. He shut himself up in a cave, and gave himself to the diligent study of Thucydides. That he might not be tempted to spend his time in society, he rendered his appearance ridiculous by shaving one side of his head. To correct a stammering utterance, he

<sup>1</sup> Antiphon (480–411 B.C.) was regarded by the Greeks as the first of the ten Athenian orators. Lysias (458–?378 B.C.), Isocrates (436–338 B.C.), and Isæus (b. about 420 B.C.) were all noted representatives of the art of political or forensic oratory, and forerunners of Demosthenes. We should call Isocrates a rhetorician instead of an orator, as his discourses (which for the most part were written for others to deliver) were intended to be read rather than spoken. The Roman Cicero was his debtor and imitator.

<sup>2</sup> “This custom still prevails throughout Hellas. No man of note dies without the offering of this last tribute by his friends or relatives. Many men make the delivery of these funeral orations their profession.” — TIMAGENIS.

spoke with pebbles in his mouth, and broke himself of an ungainly habit of shrugging his shoulders by speaking beneath a suspended sword. To accustom himself to the tumult and interruptions of the public assembly, he declaimed upon the noisiest sea-shore.



DEMOSTHENES.

These are some of the many stories told of the world's greatest orator. There is doubtless this much truth in them at least — that Demosthenes attained success, in spite of great discouragement.

ments, by persevering and laborious effort. It is certain that he was a most diligent student of Thucydides, whose great history he is said to have known by heart. More than sixty of his orations have been preserved. "Of all human productions they present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection."

The latter part of the life of Demosthenes is intertwined with that of another and rival Athenian orator, Æschines. For his services to the state, the Athenians proposed to award to Demosthenes a crown of gold. Æschines opposed this. All Athens and strangers from far and near gathered in the Agora, to hear the rival orators; for every matter at Athens was decided by a great debate. Demosthenes made the grandest effort of his life. His address, known as the "Oration on the Crown," has been declared to be "the most polished and powerful effort of human oratory." Æschines was completely crushed, and was sent into exile, and became a teacher of oratory at Rhodes.

He is said to have once gathered his disciples about him, and to have read to them the oration of Demosthenes that had proved so fatal to himself. Carried away by the torrent of its eloquence, his pupils, unable to restrain their enthusiasm, burst into applause. "Ah!" said Æschines, who seemed to find solace in the fact that his defeat had been at the hands of so worthy an antagonist, "you should have heard the wild beast himself!"

Respecting the orations (Philippics) of Demosthenes against Philip of Macedon, and the death of the eloquent patriot, we have already spoken (see pp. 266, 279).

#### IV. THE ALEXANDRIAN AGE (300-146 B.C.)

**Character of the Literature.**—The Alexandrian period of Greek literature embraces the time between the break-up of Alexander's empire and the conquest of Greece by Rome (300-146 B.C.). During this period Alexandria in Egypt was the center of literary activity, hence the term *Alexandrian*, applied to the literature of the age. The great museum and library of the Ptolemies

afforded in that capital such facilities for students and authors as existed in no other city in the world.

But the creative age of Greek literature was over. With the loss of political liberty, literature was cut off from its sources of inspiration. Consequently, the Alexandrian literature lacked freshness, spontaneity, originality. It was imitative, critical, and learned. The writers of the period were grammarians, commentators, and translators — in a word, book-worms.

**Works and Writers.** — One of the most important literary undertakings of the age was the translation of the Old Testament of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. From the traditional number of translators (seventy) the version is known as the *Septuagint* (Latin for seventy). The work was probably begun by Ptolemy Philadelphus, and was completed under his successors.

It was also during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus that Manetho wrote, from the monuments, his history of Egypt (see p. 17). Just about the same time Berosus compiled, for one of the Seleucidæ, the chronicles of Chaldæa. We possess only fragments of these works, but these have a high historical value.

Among the poets of the period one name, and only one, stands out clear and pre-eminent. This is that of Theocritus, a Sicilian idyllist, who wrote at Alexandria under Ptolemy Philadelphus. His idyls are beautiful pictures of Sicilian pastoral life.

During the Alexandrian period science was cultivated by Greek scholars with considerable success; but the names most noted in this department will more properly find a place in the following chapter on Greek philosophy and science.

**Conclusion: Græco-Roman Writers.** — After the Roman conquest of Greece, the center of Greek literary activity shifted from Alexandria to Rome. Hence Greek literature now passes into what is known as its Græco-Roman Period (146 B.C.—527 A.D.).

The most noted historical writer of the first part of this period was Polybius (about 203–121 B.C.), who wrote a history of the Roman conquests from 264 to 146 B.C. His work, though the larger part of it has reached us in a very mutilated state, is of

great worth ; for Polybius wrote of matters that had become history in his own day. He had lived to see the larger part of the world he knew absorbed by the evergrowing power of the Imperial City.

Diodorus Siculus (lived under Augustus Cæsar at Rome) was the author of a General History of the World. Herodotus had grouped all his material about the struggle between Greece and Persia, but Diodorus Siculus makes Rome the centre of the whole story. Already men were coming to regard Rome as the pre-ordained head and ruler of the world.

Plutarch (b. about 40 A.D.), "the prince of biographers," will always live in literature as the author of the *Parallel Lives*, in which, with great wealth of illustrative anecdotes, he compares or contrasts Greek and Roman statesmen and soldiers. The motive that led Plutarch to write the book, as we may infer from the partiality which he displays for his Grecian heroes, was a desire "to show the world that there was a time when the Greeks were superior to the Romans."

## CHAPTER XII.

## GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE.

**Relation of Mythology to Philosophy.** — Philosophy has been very aptly defined as mythology grown old and wise. Grecian mythology did not become sufficiently wise to be called philosophy until the sixth century B.C. About that time the Greeks began to think and to inquire in a philosophical manner respecting the phenomena and laws of the universe of mind and matter, giving the most attention at first, however, to the physical world. Having once entered upon this path, the Greek race reached, almost at a bound, the loftiest heights of philosophical speculation.

**The Use of Verse in Philosophy.** — All the earlier Greek philosophers were poet-philosophers; that is, they conveyed their instruction in verse, “dragging the hexameter,” as one figures it, “along the pathway of their argument upon the entities, like a pompous sacrificial vestment.” Heraclitus (about 500 B.C.) was the first prominent thinker to employ prose in philosophical discussions. As a consequence of his innovation, he failed to be understood, and his would-be disciples were out of patience with him because he did not philosophize to them in the usual way.

**The Seven Sages; the Forerunners.** — About the sixth century B.C. there lived and taught in different parts of Hellas many philosophers of real or reputed originality and wisdom. Among these were seven men, called the “Seven Sages,” who held the place of pre-eminence. As in the case of the Seven Wonders of the World, ancient writers were not always agreed as to what names should be accorded the honor of enrollment in the sacred number. Thales, Solon, Periander, Cleobulus, Chilo, Bias, and Pittacus are, however, usually reckoned as the Seven Wise Men. To them



belongs the distinction of having first aroused the Greek intellect to philosophical thought. The wise sayings — such as “Know thyself” and “Nothing in excess” — attributed to them, are beyond number.

It will be noticed that several of the sages were tyrants or lawgivers. This is not a mere coincidence; it is explained by the fact that participation in active political life stirs and quickens the intellect.

The ethical maxims and practical proverbs ascribed to the sages, while, like the so-called proverbs of Solomon, they contain a vast amount of practical wisdom, still do not constitute philosophy proper, which is a systematic search for the reason and causes of things. They form simply the introduction or prelude to Greek philosophy.

**The Ionic Philosophers.** — The first Greek school of philosophy grew up in the cities of Ionia, in Asia Minor, where almost all forms of Hellenic culture seem to have had their beginning. The founder of the system was Thales of Miletus (about 640–550 B.C.), who was followed by Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Heraclitus.

One tenet held in common by all these philosophers was that matter and mind are inseparable; or, in other words, that all matter is animate. They never thought of the soul as something distinct and separable from matter, as we do. Even the shade in Hades was conceived as having a body in every respect like that the soul possessed in the earthly life, only it was composed of a subtler substance. This conception of matter as being alive will help us to understand Greek mythology, which, it will be remembered, endowed trees, rivers, springs, clouds, the planets, all physical objects indeed, with intelligence and will.

This sensate matter the philosophers held to be eternal, regarding creation and annihilation as both alike impossible.

But this animated matter appeared under four forms — fire, air, water, and earth, the well-known “four elements.”<sup>1</sup> Out of

<sup>1</sup> At first the elements numbered only three, — air, water, and earth, — fire being regarded as simply a kind of refined air. These elements of the ancient philosophers answer to the seventy or more elements of modern chemistry.

these four elements all things in heaven and earth were made. But the philosophers differed as to which of the four elements was the original principle, that is, the one from which all the others were derived; for the Greek mind could not rest until it had found unity. Thales believed water to be the first principle; Anaximenes urged that it was air; while Heraclitus taught that it was fire.<sup>1</sup>

From the original element all the others were supposed to be derived by a process of rarefaction and condensation. (This notion is something like the modern theory of astronomical evolution, which, from an original infinitely expanded gaseous nebula, produces by successive condensations the air, the water, and the solid rock of the various planets.) Rain was simply condensed air. The wood and flesh of the sacrifice, when consumed upon the altar, were merely transformed into fire (ether), which seeking its own, naturally mounted to its native sphere — the empyrean. This philosophical notion helps us to understand the fundamental idea of the ancient sacrifices. The gods were pleased with the offerings, because these being converted into flame or ether, could be actually partaken of as food by the celestials.

**Pythagoras.** — Pythagoras (about 580–500 B.C.) was born on the island of Samos, whence his title of “Samian Sage.” Probable tradition says that he spent many years of his early life in Egypt, where, being admitted, through the favor and influence of King Amasis, to the sacred colleges of the priests, he became versed in all the mysteries of the Egyptians. He returned to Greece with a great reputation, and finally settled at Croton, in Italy. Here he gathered about him a renowned school, or society, composed of six hundred companions, all selected with special regard to their capacity to assimilate his peculiar doctrines.

Like many another ancient philosopher, Pythagoras sought to

<sup>1</sup> By the term *fire* the ancient philosophers meant about what we understand by the term *ether* (which comes from the Greek word *ἀίθερ*, meaning “to burn”). The ether or fire formed a sphere above the air, ensphering it just as it in turn enspheres the earth.

increase the reverence of his disciples for himself by peculiarities of dress and manner. His uncut hair and beard flowed down upon his shoulders and over his breast. He never smiled. His dress was a white robe, with a golden crown. For the first years of their novitiate, his pupils were not allowed to look upon their master. They listened to his lectures from behind a curtain. *Ipse dixit*, "he himself said so," was the only argument they must employ in debate. It is to Pythagoras that we are indebted for the word *philosopher*. Being asked of what he was master, he replied that he was simply a "philosopher," that is, a "lover of wisdom."

Pythagoras held views of the solar system that anticipated by two thousand years those of Copernicus and his school. He taught, only to his most select pupils however, that the earth is a sphere; and that, like the other planets, it revolves about a central globe of fire. From him comes the pretty conceit of the "music of the spheres." He imagined that the heavenly spheres, by their swift, rolling motions, produced musical notes, which united in a celestial melody, too refined for human ears. Music held an important place in his system of philosophy.

He taught the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, an idea he had doubtless brought from Egypt. Because of this belief the Pythagoreans were strict vegetarians, abstaining religiously from the use of all animal food.

**Anaxagoras.** — Anaxagoras (499–427 B.C.) was the first Greek philosopher who made *mind*, instead of necessity or chance, the arranging and harmonizing force of the universe. "Reason rules the world" was his first maxim. This proposition, which makes mind and matter two distinct things, and mind the fashioner of matter, marks a turning-point in Greek philosophy. It based it upon the same fundamental conceptions as that upon which the Hebrew philosophy of the world rested, and prepared the way for the union, four centuries later, of these two systems of thought, at Alexandria (see p. 340).

Anaxagoras was the teacher in philosophy of Pericles, and it is

certain that that statesman was greatly influenced by the liberal views of the philosopher; for in his general conceptions of the universe, Anaxagoras was far in advance of his age. He ventured to believe that the moon was somewhat like the earth, and inhabited; and taught that the sun was not a god, but a glowing rock, as large, probably, as the Peloponnesus.

But for his audacity, the philosopher suffered the fate of Galileo in a later age; he was charged with impiety and exiled. Yet this did not disturb the serenity of his mind. In banishment he said, "It is not I who have lost the Athenians, but the Athenians who have lost me."

**Empedocles and Democritus.**— In the teachings of Empedocles (about 492–432 B.C.) and Democritus (about 460–370 B.C.) we meet with many speculations respecting the constitution of matter and the origin of things which are startlingly similar to some of the doctrines held by modern scientists.

Empedocles was an evolutionist. He said, "Since the higher forms of life can only arise out of the lower, these latter must be regarded as the lower stages through which the former must pass." In this conclusion Empedocles anticipated modern evolutionists twenty centuries; but then he failed to point out the law (natural selection) through the operations of which the transformation takes place, and so his happy guess as to the "origin of species" remained only a guess.

Democritus, in his theory of atoms, made a very close approach in some respects to the views of modern physicists regarding the constitution of matter and the formation of the worlds. He conceived all things, including the soul, to be composed of invisible, uncreated atoms, all alike in quality, but differing in form and combination. Respecting the formation of the world from the original chaos of atoms, he held a theory that had points of similarity to the modern nebular hypothesis.

**The Sophists.**— The Sophists, of whom the most noted were Protagoras, Gorgias, and Prodicus, were a class of philosophers or teachers who gave instruction in rhetoric and the art of disputa-

tion. They travelled about from city to city, and, contrary to the usual custom of the Greek philosophers, took fees from their pupils. They were shallow but brilliant men, caring more for the dress in which the thought was arrayed than for the thought itself, more for victory than for truth; and some of them inculcated a selfish morality, placing expediency before right. The better philosophers of the time despised them, and applied to them many harsh epithets, taunting them with selling wisdom, and accusing them of boasting that they could "make the worse appear the better reason."

But this latter accusation was unjust. What the Sophists, among other things conducive to success in life, really taught the people was the art of conducting their own cases before the great citizen-juries, where every man was forced to be his own advocate. That their pupils often employed the art in making the unjust appear the just cause, there is no doubt; but the Sophists should hardly be held responsible for this abuse of the art they taught. The lawyer's profession of the present day is often perverted, but not for that reason should the whole art of pleading and of forensic oratory be left untaught.

**Socrates.**—Volumes would not contain what would be both instructive and interesting respecting the lives and works of the three great philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. We can, however, accord to each only a few words. Of these three eminent thinkers, Socrates (469–399 B.C.), though surpassed in grasp and power of intellect by both Plato and Aristotle, has the firmest hold upon the affections of the world.

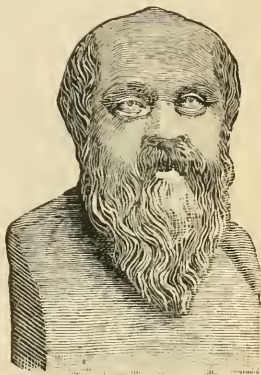
Nature, while generous to the philosopher in the gifts of soul, was unkind to him in the matter of his person. His face was ugly as a satyr's, and he had an awkward, shambling walk, so that he invited the shafts of the comic poets of his time. His figure is said to have been the most ungainly, and therefore the most familiar, of any upon the streets of Athens. He loved to gather a little circle about him in the Agora or in the streets, and then to draw out his listeners by a series of ingenious questions. His method

was so peculiar to himself that it has received the designation of the "Socratic dialogue." He has very happily been called an *educator*, as opposed to an *instructor*. In the young men of his time Socrates found many devoted pupils. The youthful Alcibiades declared that "he was forced to stop his ears and flee away, that he might not sit down by the side of Socrates and grow old in listening."

Socrates was unfortunate in his domestic relations. Xanthippe, his wife, seems to have been of a practical turn of mind, and unable to sympathize with the abstracted ways of her husband. "Sometimes she threw water on him; but this only elicited from the mild philosopher the remark to those about him, 'Did I not say that Xanthippe was thundering and would soon rain?'"

This great philosopher believed that the proper study of mankind is man, his favorite maxim being "Know Thyself"; hence he is said to have brought philosophy from the heavens and introduced it to the homes of men.

Socrates held the Sophists in aversion, and in opposition to their selfish expediency taught the purest system of morals that the world had yet known, and which has been surpassed only by the precepts of the Great Teacher. He thought himself to be restrained from entering upon what was inexpedient or wrong, by a tutelary spirit (demon). He believed in the immortality of the soul and in a Supreme Ruler of the universe, but sometimes spoke slightly of the temples and the popular deities. This led to his prosecution on the double charge of blasphemy and of corrupting the Athenian youth. The fact that Alcibiades had been his pupil was used to prove the demoralizing tendency of his teachings. He was condemned to drink the fatal hemlock. The night before



SOCRATES.



his death he spent with his disciples, discoursing on the immortality of the soul.

**Plato.**—Plato (429–348 B.C.), “the broad-browed,” was a philosopher of noble birth, before whom in youth opened a brilliant career in the world of Greek affairs; but, coming under the influence of Socrates, he resolved to give up all his prospects in politics and devote himself to philosophy. Upon the condemnation and death of his master he went into voluntary exile. In many lands he gathered knowledge and met with varied experiences. He



PLATO.

visited Sicily, where he was so unfortunate as to call upon himself the resentment of Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, through having worsted him in an argument, and also by an uncourtly plainness of speech. The king caused him to be sold into slavery as a prisoner of war. Being ransomed by a friend, he found his way to his native Athens, and established a school of philosophy in the Academy, a public garden close to Athens. Here, amid the disciples that thronged to his lectures, he passed the greater part of his long life — he died 348 B.C., at the age of eighty-one years — laboring incessantly upon the great works that bear his name.

Plato imitated in his writings Socrates' method in conversation. The discourse is carried on by questions and answers, hence the term *Dialogues* that attaches to his works. He attributes to his master, Socrates, much of the philosophy that he teaches: yet his *Dialogues* are all deeply tinged with his own genius and thought. In the *Republic* Plato portrays his conception of an ideal state. He was opposed to the republic of Athens, and his

system, in some of its main features, was singularly like the Feudal System of Mediæval Europe. Especially is this true as to his military aristocracy.

The *Phædo* is a record of the last conversation of Socrates with his disciples — an immortal argument for the immortality of the soul.

Plato believed not only in a future life (post-existence), but also in pre-existence; teaching that the ideas of reason, or our intuitions, are reminiscences of a past experience.<sup>1</sup> Plato's doctrines have exerted a profound influence upon all schools of thought and philosophies since his day. In some of his precepts he made a close approach to the teachings of Christianity. "We ought to become like God," he said, "as far as this is possible; and to become like Him is to become holy and just and wise."

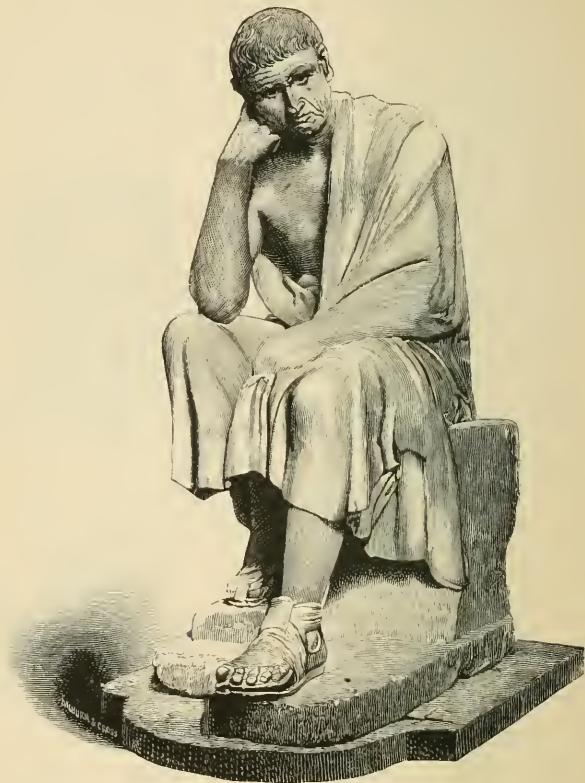
**Aristotle.** — As Socrates was surpassed by his pupil Plato, so in turn was Plato excelled by his disciple Aristotle, "the master of those who know." In him the philosophical genius of the Hel-

<sup>1</sup> In the following lines from Wordsworth we catch a glimpse of Plato's doctrine of pre-existence:

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
Nor yet in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come  
From God, who is our home." — *Ode on Immortality*.

And again: "And but for our surface and distracted lives — lived here for the most part in the senses — we should have never lost the consciousness of our descent into immortality, nor have questioned our resurrection and longevity. But as in descending all drink of oblivion — some more, some less — it happens that while all are conscious of life, by defect of memory our recollections are various concerning it; those discerning most vividly who have drunk least of oblivion, they more easily recalling the memory of their past existence. Ancient of days, we hardly are persuaded to believe that our souls are no older than our bodies, and to date our nativity from our family registers, as if time and space could chronicle the periods of the immortal mind by its advent into the flesh and decease out of it." — *ALCOTT'S Tablets*, p. 203.

lenic intellect reached its culmination. It may be doubted whether all the ages since his time have produced so profound and powerful an intellect as his. He was born in the Macedonian city of Stagira (384 B.C.), and hence is frequently called the "Sta-



ARISTOTLE.

girate." As in the case of Socrates, his personal appearance gave no promise of the philosopher. He had a small and contemptible body, the defects of which were made more noticeable by his over-

scrupulous care of his dress and by the finery he wore. His teacher Plato, however, recognized the genius of his pupil, and called him the "Mind of the school." When he missed him from the class he would say, "Intellect is not here to-day." He also called him "The Reader," because he devoured so eagerly the works of the masters.

After studying for twenty years in the school of Plato, Aristotle became the preceptor of Alexander the Great. When Philip invited him to become the tutor of his son, he gracefully complimented the philosopher by saying in his letter that he was grateful to the gods that the prince was born in the same age with him. The royal pupil loved his great teacher with an affectionate devotion. He said, "I owe great love to my father and to my teacher Aristotle; to one for living, and to the other for living well." Alexander became the liberal patron of his tutor, and, besides giving him large sums of money, aided him in his scientific studies by sending him large collections of plants and animals, gathered on his distant expeditions.

At Athens the great philosopher delivered his lectures while walking about beneath the trees and porticos of the Lyceum; hence the term *peripatetic* (from the Greek *peripatein*, "to walk about") applied to his philosophy. He died 322 B.C., the same year that marks the death of Demosthenes.

Among the productions of his fertile intellect are works on rhetoric, logic, poetry, morals and politics, physics and metaphysics. For centuries his works were studied and copied and commented upon by both European and Asiatic scholars, in the schools of Athens and Rome, of Alexandria and Constantinople. Until the time of Bacon in England, for nearly two thousand years, Aristotle ruled over the realm of mind with a despotic sway. All teachers and philosophers acknowledged him as their guide and master.

**Zeno and the Stoics.**—We are now approaching the period when the political life of Hellas was failing, and was being fast overshadowed by the greatness of Rome. But the intellectual life

of the Greek race was by no means eclipsed by the calamity that ended its political existence. For centuries after that event the poets, scholars, and philosophers of this intellectual people led a brilliant career in the schools and universities of the Roman world.

From among all the philosophers of this long period, we can select for brief mention only a few. And first we shall speak of Zeno and Epicurus, who are noted as founders of schools of philosophy that exerted a vast influence upon both the thought and the conduct of many centuries.

Zeno, founder of the celebrated school of the Stoics, lived in the third century before our era (about 362-264). He taught at Athens in a public porch (in Greek, *stoa*), from which circumstance comes the name applied to his disciples.

The Stoical philosophy was the outgrowth, in part at least, of that of the Cynics, a sect of most rigid and austere morals. The typical representative of this sect is found in Diogenes, who lived, so the story goes, in a tub, and went about Athens by daylight with a lantern, in search, as he said, of a *man*. The Cynics were simply a race of pagan hermits: Diogenes was the Simon Stylites (a noted Christian ascetic) of the sect.

Zeno adopted all that was good in the code of the Cynics, and, adding to this everything that he found of value in the systems of other philosophers, he formed therefrom his new philosophy. It became a favorite system of thought with certain classes of the Romans, and under its teachings and doctrines were nourished some of the purest and loftiest characters produced by the pagan world. It numbered among its representatives, in later times, the illustrious Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, and the scarcely less renowned and equally virtuous slave Epictetus. In many of its teachings it anticipated Christian doctrines, and was, in the philosophical world, a very important preparation for Christianity.

The Stoics inculcated virtue for the sake of itself. They believed — and it would be very difficult to frame a better creed — that “man’s chief business here is to do his duty.” Bodily pain,

they taught, was nothing ; and they schooled themselves to bear with perfect composure any lot that destiny might appoint. Any sign of emotion on account of calamity was considered unmanly and unphilosophical. Thus, when told of the sudden death of his son, the Stoic replied, "Well, I never imagined that I had given life to an immortal."

**Epicurus and the Epicureans.** — Epicurus (342-270 B.C.), who was a contemporary of Zeno, taught, in opposition to the Stoics, that *pleasure* is the highest good. He recommended virtue, indeed, but only as a means for the attainment of pleasure ; whereas the Stoics made virtue an end in itself. In other words, Epicurus said, "Be virtuous, because virtue will bring you the greatest amount of happiness" ; Zeno said, "Be virtuous, because you ought to be."

Epicurus had many followers in Greece, and his doctrines were eagerly embraced by many among the Romans during the corrupt and licentious period of the Roman empire. Many of these disciples carried the doctrines of their master to an excess that he himself would have been the first to condemn. (There is often more of good or evil in a philosophy than its founder ever dreams of.) Allowing full indulgence to every appetite and passion, their whole philosophy was expressed in the proverb, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." No pure or exalted life could be nourished in the unwholesome atmosphere of such a philosophy. Epicureanism never produced a single great character.

**The Skeptics ; Pyrrho.** — About the beginning of the third century B.C. skepticism became widespread in Greece. It seemed as though men were losing faith in everything. Many circumstances had worked together in bringing about this state of universal unbelief. A wider knowledge of the world had caused many to lose their faith in the myths and legends of the old mythologies. The existence of so many systems of philosophy caused men to doubt the truth of any of them. The conquests of Alexander, by bringing the Greek mind in contact with the



strange Asiatic systems of belief, tended powerfully to deepen and confirm this feeling of bewilderment and uncertainty. Many thoughtful minds were hopelessly asking, "What is truth?"

Pyrrho (about 360-270 B.C.) was the Greek Thomas. He doubted everything, and declared that the great problems of the universe could not be solved. It was the duty of man, and the part of wisdom, to entertain no positive judgment on any matter, and thus to ensure serenity and peace of mind.

The disciples of Pyrrho went to absurd lengths in their skepticism, some of them even saying that they asserted nothing, not even that they asserted nothing. They doubted whether they doubted.

**The Neo-Platonists.** — Neo-Platonism was a blending of Greek philosophy and Oriental mysticism. It has been well called the "despair of reason," because it abandoned all hope of man's ever being able to attain the *highest* knowledge through the intellect, and held that the human soul, when in an ecstatic state or prophet-like trance, received, through a higher faculty than reason, in a sort of vision, revelations of divine and eternal truth. It was chiefly a theological philosophy; that is, it dealt with the nature of God and his relations to man. The centre of this last movement in Greek philosophical thought was Alexandria in Egypt, the meeting-place, in the closing centuries of the ancient world, of the East and the West.

Philo the Jew (b. about 30 B.C.), who labored to harmonize Hebrew doctrines with the teachings of Plato, was the forerunner of the Neo-Platonists. But the greatest of the school was Plotinus (A.D. 204-269), who spent the last years of his life at Rome, where he was a great favorite. Four times in six years, according to one of his disciples, was he freed from the body, and being absorbed in the Infinite, saw God, in ecstatic vision.

**Conflict between Neo-Platonism and Christianity.** — While the Neo-Platonists were laboring to restore, in modified form, the ancient Greek philosophy and worship, the teachers of Christianity were fast winning the world over to a new faith. The two

systems came into deadly antagonism. For a time the issue of the contention between the Hellenic philosophers and the Christian Fathers may have seemed doubtful. But by the close of the third century A.D. it was plain that the majority of the people of the Roman empire, which now virtually embraced the world, were already, or at least soon would be, disciples of the Christian teachers. It was doubtless his persuasion of this fact that led the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great (A.D. 306-337) to throw his influence on the side of the Christian Fathers, and proclaim Christianity as the favored religion of the empire.

Under Julian the Apostate (Roman Emperor A.D. 361-363), who was an ardent Neo-Platonist, the Hellenic philosophy was restored, and every effort made to discredit and destroy the Christian faith. With his death, however, passed away the last good hope of the restoration of the renovated philosophy of ancient Greece. The gifted and beautiful Hypatia, almost the last representative of the old system of speculation and belief, was torn to pieces in the streets of Alexandria by a mob of fanatic Christian monks (A.D. 415). Finally the Roman Emperor Justinian forbade the pagan philosophers to teach their doctrines (A.D. 529).<sup>1</sup> This imperial edict closed forever the Greek schools, in which for more than a thousand years the world had received instruction upon the loftiest themes that can engage the human mind. The Greek philosophers, as living, personal teachers, had finished their work; but their systems of thought will never cease to attract and influence the best minds of the race.

### *Science among the Greeks.*

In ancient times no single people or race excelled in all departments of knowledge or human endeavor. Having, then, seen the wonderful genius of the Greek race for art, literature, and philosophy, we are prepared to learn that they never evinced great aptitude for the more practical sciences. In art and literature the

<sup>1</sup> See *Mediæval and Modern History*, pp. 68, 69.

Greeks are still our teachers; in science we are immeasurably their superiors. Still, while this is true, the contributions of the Greek observers to the physical sciences have laid us under no small obligation to them. Especially did the later Greeks do much good and lasting work in the mathematical sciences.

Some of those whom we have classed as philosophers, Thales and Anaxagoras for instance, were careful students of nature, and might be called scientists. The great philosopher Aristotle wrote some valuable works on anatomy and natural history, his observations being held in the highest esteem by naturalists of the present day for their accuracy. From his time onward the sciences were pursued with much zeal and success.

**Mathematics: Euclid and Archimedes.** — Alexandria, in Egypt, became the seat of the most celebrated school of mathematics of antiquity. Here, under Ptolemy Lagus, flourished Euclid, the great geometer, whose work forms the basis of the science of geometry as taught in our schools at the present time. Ptolemy himself was his pupil. The royal student, however, seems to have disliked the severe application required to master the problems of Euclid, and asked his teacher if there was not some easier way. Euclid replied, "There is no royal road to geometry."

In the third century B.C., Syracuse, in Sicily, was the home of Archimedes, the greatest mathematician that the Grecian world produced. He had a marvellous genius for figures, and investigated the abstrusest problems in geometry, mechanics, and the allied sciences. The range and productiveness of his genius are shown by the following titles to some of his works: *On Bodies Floating in Fluids; On Centres of Gravity; On the Sphere and the Cylinder.*

His acquaintance with the first subject is illustrated by the familiar story that is told of the manner in which he detected the impurity of the gold in the crown of Hiero, king of Syracuse. The king, suspecting that the gold had been alloyed, submitted the article to Archimedes, who detected the fraud by means of the principle of specific gravities, which was suggested to him while

bathing. Leaping from the bath, he ran through the corridors, exclaiming, "*Eureka! Eureka!*" — "I have found it! I have found it!"

His knowledge of the second subject and of the laws of the lever is indicated by the oft-quoted boast that he made to Hiero: "Give me a place to stand, and I will move the world." His elucidation of the properties of the sphere and cylinder were, even in his own estimation, so important that he requested that a figure of these should be placed, as the fittest memorial of his life, upon his tomb. More than one hundred years afterwards Cicero discovered and identified the monument by means of these emblems.

During the siege of Syracuse by the Romans, Archimedes rendered his native city valuable service by driving off or destroying the enemy's vessels by means of ingenious and powerful engines. The story of his setting fire to the Roman ships by means of mirrors reflecting the sun's rays, is, after much discussion, allowed to be not only possible, but probable. Archimedes perished in the sack of the city (212 B.C.), but in what way he met his death is not known with certainty.

**Astronomy and Geography.** — Among ancient Greek astronomers and geographers, the names of Aristarchus, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus, Strabo, Pausanias, and Claudius Ptolemy are distinguished.

Aristarchus of Samos, who lived in the third century B.C., held that the earth revolves about the sun as a fixed center, and rotates on its own axis. He was the Greek Copernicus. But his theory was rejected by his contemporaries and successors.

Eratosthenes (b. about 276 B.C.) might be called an astronomical geographer. His greatest achievement was the fairly accurate determination of the circumference of the earth by means of the different lengths of the shadow cast by the midday sun in Upper and Lower Egypt at the time of the summer solstice.

Hipparchus, who flourished about the middle of the second century B.C., was, through his careful observations, the real founder of scientific astronomy. He calculated eclipses, observed the

precession of the equinoxes, catalogued the stars, and wrote several astronomical works of a really scientific character.

Strabo was born about half a century before our era. He travelled over a large part of the world, and describes, as an eye-witness, the scenery, the productions, and the peoples of all the countries known to the ancients.

About two centuries after Strabo's time, Pausanias wrote his "Tour of Greece," a sort of guide-book, which is crowded with invaluable little items of interest respecting all the places best worth visiting in Greece.

Claudius Ptolemy, the most noted of ancient astronomers, lived in Egypt about the middle of the second century after Christ. His great reputation is due not so much to his superior genius as to the fortunate circumstance that a vast work<sup>1</sup> compiled by him, preserved and transmitted to later times almost all the knowledge of the ancient world on astronomical and geographical subjects. In this way it has happened that his name has become attached to various doctrines and views respecting the universe, though these probably were not originated by him. The phrase *Ptolemaic system*, however, links his name inseparably, whether the honor be fairly his or not, with that conception of the solar system set forth in his works, which continued to be the received theory from his time until Copernicus — fourteen centuries later.

Ptolemy combated the theory of Aristarchus in regard to the rotation and revolution of the earth; yet he believed the earth to be a globe, and supported this view by exactly the same arguments that we to-day use to prove the doctrine.

**Medicine and Anatomy.** — Hippocrates (b. about 460 B.C.), the founder of a school of medicine at Cos, did so much to emancipate the art of healing from superstition and ignorance, and to make it a scientific study, that he is called the "Father of Medicine."<sup>2</sup> His central doctrine was that there are laws of disease

<sup>1</sup> Known to Mediæval Europe by its Arabian title *Almagest*, meaning "the greatest."

<sup>2</sup> The patron god of medicine was Æsculapius.

as well as laws of healthy life. The works ascribed to him form the basis of modern medical science.

The most noted Greek physician after Hippocrates was Galenus Claudius, or simply Galen (about A.D. 130-193). He wrote a multitude of books, which gathered up all the medical and anatomical knowledge of his time, and which were greatly prized and carefully studied by the medical students of the Middle Ages.

The advance of the science of anatomy among the ancient Greeks was hindered by their feelings respecting the body, which caused them to look with horror upon its deliberate mutilation. Surprising as the statement may appear, it is nevertheless true that Aristotle, "the greatest of all thinkers in antiquity, the son of a physician, especially educated in physical science, and well acquainted for the time with the dissection of animals, regarded the brain as a lump of cold substance, quite unfit to be the seat and organ of the *sensus communis*."<sup>1</sup> This important office he ascribed rather to the heart. The brain he considered to be chiefly useful as the source of fluids for lubricating the eyes, etc."<sup>2</sup> At Alexandria, however, in the later period, under the influence doubtless of Egyptian practices in embalming, the Greek physicians greatly promoted the knowledge of anatomy not only by the dissection of dead bodies, but even by the vivisection of criminals condemned to death.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The thinking faculty, the mind.

<sup>2</sup> Ladd's *Elements of Physiological Psychology*, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> Some practices among the Greek physicians strike us as peculiar. The following is too characteristically Greek to be omitted. Plato, in the *Gorgias*, tells us that sometimes the doctor took a Sophist along with him to persuade the patient to take his prescription. Professor Mahaffy comments thus upon this practice: "This was done because it was the fashion to discuss everything in Greece, and people were not satisfied to submit silently to anybody's prescription, either in law, politics, religion, or medicine."



## CHAPTER XIII.

## SOCIAL LIFE OF THE GREEKS.

**Education.** — Education at Sparta, where it was chiefly gymnastic, as we have seen, was a state affair ; but at Athens and throughout Greece generally, the youth were trained in private schools. These schools were of all grades, ranging from those kept by the most obscure teachers, who gathered their pupils in some recess of the street, to those established in the Athenian Academy and Lyceum by such philosophers as Plato and Aristotle.

It was only the boys who received education. These Grecian boys, Professor Mahaffy imagines, were “the most attractive the world has ever seen.” At all events, we may believe that they were trained more carefully and delicately than the youth among any other people before or since the days of Hellenic culture.

In the nursery, the boy was taught the beautiful myths and stories of the national mythology and religion.<sup>1</sup> At about seven

<sup>1</sup> At the birth of a child, many customs of a significant character were carefully observed. Thus at Sparta the new-born infant was first cradled on a shield, which symbolized the martial life of the Spartan citizen; while at Athens the child was laid upon a mantle in which was wrought the ægis of Athena, by which act was emblemized and invoked the protection of that patron goddess. Infanticide was almost universally practised throughout Greece. (At Thebes, however, the exposure of children was prohibited by severe laws.) Such philosophers as Plato and Aristotle saw nothing in the custom to condemn. Among the Spartans, as we have already learned, the state determined what infants might be preserved, condemning the weakly or ill-formed to be cast out to die. At Athens and in other states the right to expose his child was given to the father. The infant was abandoned in some desert place, or left in some frequented spot in the hope that it might be picked up and cared for. Greek literature, like that of every other people of antiquity, is filled with stories and dramas all turning upon points afforded

he entered school, being led to and from the place of training by an old slave, who bore the name of *pedagogue*, which in Greek means a guide or leader of boys — not a teacher. His studies were grammar, music, and gymnastics, the aim of the course being to secure a symmetrical development of mind and body alike.

Grammar included reading, writing, and arithmetic; music, which embraced a wide range of mental accomplishments, trained the boy to appreciate the masterpieces of the great poets, to contribute his part to the musical diversions of private entertain-



A GREEK SCHOOL. (After a vase-painting.)

ments, and to join in the sacred choruses and in the pæan of the battle-field. The exercises of the palestræ and the gymnasia trained him for the Olympic contests, or for those sterner hand-to-hand battle-struggles, in which so much depended upon personal strength and dexterity.

Upon reaching maturity, the youth was enrolled in the list of citizens. But his graduation from school was his "commencement" in a much more real sense than with the average modern by this common practice. The career of Sargon of Agadê, of Cyrus the Great of Persia, of the Hebrew Moses, of (Edipus of Thebes, of Romulus and Remus of Roman legend, and a hundred others, are all prefaced by the same story of exposure and fortunate rescue.

graduate. Never was there a people besides the Greeks whose daily life was so emphatically a discipline in liberal culture. The schools of the philosophers, the debates of the popular assembly, the practice of the law-courts, the masterpieces of a divine art, the religious processions, the representations of an unrivalled stage, the Panhellenic games—all these were splendid and efficient educational agencies, which produced and maintained a standard of average intelligence and culture among the citizens of the Greek cities that probably has never been attained among any other people on the earth. Freeman, quoted approvingly by Mahaffy, says that “the average intelligence of the assembled Athenian citizens was higher than that of our [the English] House of Commons.”

**Social Position of Woman.**—Although there are in Greek literature some exquisitely beautiful portraiture of ideal womanhood, still the general tone of the literature betrays a deep contempt for woman, which Symonds regards as “the greatest social blot upon the brilliant but imperfect civilization of the Greeks.” The poets are particularly sarcastic. Simonides winds up a bitter invective against women in general, in which he compares different classes of them to various despicable animals, by saying, “Zeus made this supreme evil—women: even though they seem to be of good, when one has got one, she becomes a plague.” And another poet (Hipponax) says, “A woman gives two days of happiness to man—her bridal and her burial.” Plato does not entertain a high opinion of the sex, while Thucydides quotes with seeming approval the Greek proverb,—“That woman is best who is least spoken of among men, whether for good or for evil.”

The myth of Pandora seems to have sprung up out of just such sentiments as the above. This fable evidently reacted upon the feelings and practices of the Greeks, just as the Oriental story of the Fall of Man through the temptation of Eve contributed to the giving of woman a position of inferiority and subjection in the early Christian church.

This unworthy conception of woman of course consigned her to a narrow and inferior place in the Greek home. Her position may be defined as being about halfway between Oriental seclusion and modern or Western freedom. Her main duties were to cook and spin, and to oversee the domestic slaves, of whom she herself was practically one. In the fashionable society of Ionian cities, she was seldom allowed to appear in public, or to meet, even in her own house, the male friends of her husband. In Sparta, however, and in Dorian states generally, she was accorded unusual freedom, and was a really important factor in society.

The great liberty enjoyed by the women of Dorian cities, in contrast with the seclusion and neglect to which they were condemned in Ionian communities, is doubtless to be attributed, in part at least, to the influence upon the latter of Asiatic custom, entering Greece through Ionia.

The low position generally assigned the wife in the home had a most disastrous effect upon Greek morals. She could exert no such elevating or refining influence as she casts over the modern home. The men were led to seek social and intellectual sympathy and companionship outside the family circle, among a class of talented and often highly cultured women, known as *Hetairæ*. As the most noted and brilliant representative of this class stands *Aspasia*, the friend of *Pericles*. Her conversation possessed attraction for the most prominent and accomplished men of Athens, such persons as *Socrates* and *Anaxagoras* often assembling at her house. Yet the influence of this class was most harmful to social morality, so that to the degradation of woman in the home may be traced the source of the most serious stain that rests upon Greek civilization.

**Friendship among the Greeks.** — From speaking of the inferior rank assigned woman in the Greek home, we are led by a natural transition to speak of Greek friendship between men. While it seems quite certain that that romantic sentiment to which we give distinctly the name of love, was not the same universal and absorbing passion among the Greeks that it is among modern

civilized peoples, it is equally certain that the ancient Greeks possessed a capacity for friendship between man and man such as is rarely or never seen among the men of modern times. It would scarcely be incorrect to say that the Greek men "fell in love" with each other. An ardent and romantic attachment sprang up between companions, which possessed all the higher elements of that chivalrous sentiment which the modern man seems capable of entertaining only for one of the opposite sex. "The chivalry of Hellas found its motive force," writes Symonds, "in friendship rather than in the love of woman. . . . Fraternity in arms played for the Greek race the same part as the idealization of woman for the knighthood of Feudal Europe."

Greek literature and history afford innumerable instances of this wonderful and happy capacity of the Greeks for friendship. The memory easily recalls the Homeric picture of the friendship between Achilles and Patroclus; the attachment, stronger than death, between Damon and Pythias; the friendship of the patriot heroes Pelopidas and Epaminondas, of Alexander and Hephæstion; and the attachments that united, in bonds dissolvable only by death, the members of the Sacred Band of Thebes.

**Theatrical Entertainments.**—Among the ancient Greeks the theatre was a state establishment, "a part of the constitution." This arose from the religious origin and character of the drama (see p. 311), all matters pertaining to the popular worship being the care and concern of the state. Theatrical performances, being religious acts, were presented only during religious festivals, — certain festivals observed in honor of Dionysus, — and were attended by all classes, rich and poor, men, women, and children. The women, however, except the Hetairæ, were, it would seem, permitted to witness tragedies only; the comic stage was too gross to allow of their presence.

The upper ranges of seats in the theatre were reserved for the women; the chairs bordering the orchestra were for the officers of the state and other persons of distinction; while the intervening tiers of seats were occupied by the general audience. The

spectators sat under the open sky ; and the pieces followed one after the other in close succession from early morning till night-fall.

There were companies of players who strolled about the country, just as the English actors of Shakespeare's time were wont to do. Such bands often accompanied the army to the field in time of war. While the better class of actors were highly honored, ordinary players were held in very low esteem, in which matter the Greek stage presents another parallel to that of England in the sixteenth century. And as in the Elizabethan age the writers of plays were frequently also performers, so in Greece, particularly during the early period of the drama, the author often became an actor, and assisted in the presentation of his own pieces. Still another parallel is found in the fact that the female parts in the Greek dramas, as in the early English theatre, were taken by men.

The stage machinery of the Greek theatre and the costumes of the actors were ingenious and elaborate. There were movable scenes ; trap-doors and various machines for introducing the infernal and celestial divinities and swinging them through the air ; contrivances for imitating all the familiar sounds of the country, the roar and crash of storm and thunder, and all the noises that are counterfeited on the modern stage. The tragic actor increased his height and size by wearing thick-soled buskins, an enormous mask, and padded garments. The actor in comedy wore thin-soled slippers, or socks. The *sock* being thus a characteristic part of the make-up of the ancient comic actor, and the *buskin* that of the tragic actor, these foot-coverings have come to be used



GREEK TRAGIC FIGURE.



as the symbols respectively of comedy and tragedy, as in the familiar lines of Dryden : —

“Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,  
Nor greater Jonson dares in socks appear.”

The chorus were often gorgeously and fantastically costumed. Thus in the play of the “Birds” by Aristophanes, they were arrayed each to represent some gay-plumaged bird ; while in the “Clouds,” by the same poet, to counterfeit clouds they appeared in the midst of fleecy drapery, and enveloped in the smoke of incense. By similar devices of drapery and masks, all the divinities and monsters known to Greek mythology were brought before the spectators.

The expenses of the choruses were defrayed by rich citizens, who at Athens were chosen by the different tribes in turn. The person elected to provide the chorus was known as the *choragus*. He often spent large sums in competition with other leaders. The choragus who presented the best chorus was awarded a prize, and was allowed the privilege of erecting, at his own expense, a monument in commemoration of his victory (see p. 293, choragic monument of Lysicrates).

The theatre exerted a great influence upon Greek life. It performed for ancient Greek society somewhat the same service as that rendered to modern society by the pulpit and the press. During the best days of Hellas the frequent rehearsal upon the stage of the chief incidents in the lives of the gods and the heroes served to deepen and strengthen the religious faith of the people ; and later, when with the Macedonian the days of decline came, it was one of the chief agents in the diffusion of Greek literary culture over the world. Theatres arose everywhere, and it was chiefly through the popular representations of the stage that a knowledge of the best productions of Greek literature was imparted to the mixed population of the Hellenistic cities of Egypt and Western Asia, and to the inhabitants of the cities of Italy as well.

**Banquets and Symposia.** — Banquets and drinking-parties

among the Greeks possessed some features which set them apart from similar entertainment among other people.

The banquet proper was partaken, in later times, by the guest in a reclining position, upon couches or divans, arranged about the table in the Oriental manner. After the usual courses, a libation was poured out and a hymn sung in honor of the gods, and then followed that characteristic part of the entertainment known as the *symposium*.

The *symposium* was "the intellectual side of the feast." It consisted of general conversation, riddles, and convivial songs rendered to the accompaniment of the lyre passed from hand to hand. Generally professional singers and musicians, dancing-girls, jugglers, and jesters, were called in to contribute to the merry-making. All the while the wine-bowl circulated freely, the rule being that a man might drink "as much as he could carry home without a guide, — unless he were far gone in years." Here also the Greeks applied their maxim, "Never too much." Besotted drunkenness, though by no means unknown in Greece, was always regarded as a most disgraceful thing.

The banqueters usually consumed the night in merry-making, sometimes being broken in upon from the street by other bands of revellers, who made themselves self-invited guests.

The *symposium* must at times, when the conversation was sustained by such persons as Socrates and Aristophanes, have been "a feast of reason and a flow of soul" indeed. Xenophon in his "Banquet" and Plato in his "Symposium" have each left us a striking report of such an entertainment.

**Occupations.** — The enormous body of slaves in ancient Greece (see next paragraph) relieved the free population from most of those forms of labor classed as drudgery. The æsthetic Greek regarded as degrading any kind of manual labor that marred the symmetry or beauty of the body.

At Sparta, and in other states where oligarchical constitutions prevailed, the citizens formed a sort of military caste, strikingly similar to the military aristocracy of Feudal Europe. Their chief

occupation was martial and gymnastic exercises and the administration of public affairs. The Spartans, it will be recalled, were forbidden by law to engage in trade. In other aristocratic states, as at Thebes, a man by engaging in trade disqualified himself for full citizenship.

In the democratic states, however, speaking generally, labor and trade were regarded with less contempt. A considerable portion of the citizens were traders, artisans, and farmers.

Life at Athens presented some peculiar features. All Attica being included in what we would term the corporate limits of the city, the roll of Athenian citizens included a large body of well-to-do farmers, whose residence was outside the city walls. The Attic plains, and the slopes of the half-encircling hills, were dotted with beautiful villas and inviting farmhouses. "It is probable," says a well-known student of Greek life, in speaking of the appearance of the country about Athens just before the Peloponnesian War, "that as a scene of unambitious affluence, taste, high cultivation, and rustic contentment, nothing was ever beheld to compare with Attica."<sup>1</sup>

And then Athens being the head of a great empire of subject cities, a large number of Athenian citizens were necessarily employed as salaried officials in the minor positions of the public service, and thus politics became a profession. In any event, the meetings of the popular assembly and the discussion of matters of state engrossed more or less of the time and attention of every citizen.

Again, the great Athenian jury-courts, which were busied with cases from all parts of the empire, gave constant employment to nearly one-fourth of the citizens, the fee that the jurymen received enabling him to live without other business. It is said that, in the early morning, when the jurymen were passing through the streets to the different courts, Athens appeared like a city wholly given up to the single business of law. Furthermore, the great public works, such as temples and commemorative monuments, which

<sup>1</sup> St. John, *History of the Manners and Customs of Ancient Greece.*

were in constant process of erection, afforded employment for a vast number of artists and skilled workmen of every class.

In the Agora, again, at any time of the day, a numerous class might have been found whose sole occupation, as in the case of Socrates, was to talk. The writer of the "Acts of the Apostles" was so impressed with this feature of life at Athens that he summarized the habits of the people by saying, "All the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

**Slavery.** — There is a dark side to Greek life. Hellenic art, culture, refinement — "these good things were planted, like exquisite exotic flowers, upon the black, rank soil of slavery."

The proportion of slaves to the free population in many of the states was astonishingly large. In Corinth and Ægina there were ten slaves to every freeman. In Attica the proportion was four to one; that is to say, out of a population of about 500,000, 400,000 were slaves.<sup>1</sup> Almost every freeman was a slave owner. It was accounted a real hardship to have to get along with less than half a dozen slaves.

This large class of slaves was formed in various ways. In the prehistoric period, the fortunes of war had brought the entire population of whole provinces into a servile condition, as in certain parts of the Peloponnesus. During later times, the ordinary captives of war still further augmented the ranks of these unfortunates. Their number was also largely added to by the slave traffic carried on with the barbarian peoples of Asia Minor. Criminals and debtors, too, were often condemned to servitude; while foundlings were usually brought up as slaves.

The relation of master and slave was regarded by the Greek as being, not only a legal, but a natural one. A free community, in his view, could not exist without slavery. It formed the natural basis of both the family and the state, — the relation of master and slave being regarded as "strictly analogous to the relation of

<sup>1</sup> The population of Attica in 317 B.C. is reckoned at about 527,000. That of Athens in its best days was probably not far from 150,000.

soul and body." Even Aristotle and other Greek philosophers approved the maxim that "slaves were simply domestic animals possessed of intelligence."<sup>1</sup> They were regarded just as necessary in the economy of the family as cooking utensils.

In general, Greek slaves were not treated harshly—judging their treatment by the standard of humanity that prevailed in antiquity. Some held places of honor in the family, and enjoyed the confidence and even the friendship of their master. Yet at Sparta, where slavery assumed the form of serfdom, the lot of the slave was peculiarly hard and unendurable. Even at Athens we hear much, in connection with the state silver mines at Laurium (in southern Attica), of a labor contract-system which certainly was characterized by much callousness of feeling towards the slave, if we may judge from the conditions of the usual agreement, which bound the contractor to pay an annual rental equal to one-half the value of the slave (which implies that the poor creatures were worn out rapidly), and at the expiration of the contract to return to the owner simply *the same number* of slaves as had been hired.

If ever slavery was justified by its fruits, it was in Greece. The brilliant civilization of the Greeks was its product, and could never have existed without it. As one truthfully says, "Without the slaves the Attic democracy would have been an impossibility, for they alone enabled the poor, as well as the rich, to take a part in public affairs." Relieving the citizen of all drudgery, the system created a class characterized by elegant leisure, refinement, and culture.

<sup>1</sup> This harsh, selfish theory, it should be noted, was somewhat modified and relaxed, when the slave class, through the numerous captives of the unfortunate civil wars, came to be made up in considerable part of cultured Greeks, instead of being, as was the case in earlier times, composed almost exclusively of barbarians, or of inferior branches of the Hellenic race, between whom and their cultured masters there was the same difference in mental qualities as existed between the negro slaves and their masters in our own country. The sentiment that a slave was an unfortunate person, rather than an inferior being, came to prevail—a sentiment which aided powerfully in preparing the way for the Christian doctrine of the universal brotherhood of man.

We find an almost exact historical parallel to all this in the feudal aristocracy of Mediæval Europe. Such a society has been well likened to a great pyramid, whose top may be gilded with light, while its base lies in dark shadows. The civilization of ancient Hellas was splendid and attractive, but it rested with a crushing weight upon all the lower orders of Greek society.





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AND

## PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY.

NOTE. — In the case of words whose correct pronunciation has not seemed clearly indicated by their accentuation and syllabication, the sounds of the letters have been denoted thus: *ā*, like *a* in *grāy*; *ǎ*, like *a* in *hǎve*; *ä*, like *a* in *für*; *ē*, like *ee* in *fēt*; *ĕ*, like *e* in *ĕnd*; *e* and *eh*, like *k*; *ç*, like *s*; *ġ*, like *j*; *ş*, like *z*.

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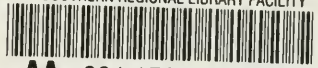
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